

**The Soncino Babylonian Talmud**



OVOS

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH WITH NOTES

*Reformatted by Reuven Brauner, Raanana 5772*  
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## Avoth Chapter 1

**MISHNAH 1.** MOSES RECEIVED THE TORAH<sup>1</sup> AT<sup>2</sup> SINAI AND TRANSMITTED IT TO JOSHUA,<sup>3</sup> JOSHUA TO THE ELDERS,<sup>4</sup> AND THE ELDERS TO THE PROPHETS, AND THE PROPHETS TO THE MEN OF THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE.<sup>5</sup> THE LATTER USED TO SAY THREE THINGS:<sup>6</sup> BE PATIENT IN [THE ADMINISTRATION OF] JUSTICE, REAR MANY DISCIPLES AND MAKE A FENCE ROUND THE TORAH.<sup>7</sup>

**MISHNAH 2.** SIMEON THE RIGHTEOUS<sup>8</sup> WAS ONE OF THE LAST OF THE MEN OF THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE. HE USED TO SAY: THE WORLD IS BASED UPON THREE THINGS: THE TORAH, DIVINE SERVICE, AND THE PRACTICE OF KINDLINESS.<sup>9</sup>

**MISHNAH 3.** ANTIGONUS<sup>10</sup> (A MAN) OF SOCHO<sup>11</sup> RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM SIMEON THE RIGHTEOUS. HE USED TO SAY: BE NOT LIKE UNTO SERVANTS WHO SERVE THE MASTER IN THE EXPECTATION OF RECEIVING A GRATUITY,<sup>12</sup> BUT BE LIKE UNTO SERVANTS WHO SERVE THE MASTER WITHOUT THE EXPECTATION OF RECEIVING A GRATUITY, AND LET THE FEAR OF HEAVEN<sup>13</sup> BE UPON YOU.<sup>14</sup>

**MISHNAH 4.** JOSE<sup>15</sup> B. JO'EZER (A MAN) OF ZEREDAH,<sup>16</sup> AND JOSE B. JOHANAN [A MAN] OF JERUSALEM RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM THEM [I.E. SIMEON THE RIGHTEOUS AND ANTIGONUS]. JOSE. B. JO'EZER<sup>17</sup> USED TO SAY: LET THY HOUSE BE A HOUSE OF MEETING FOR THE SAGES AND SUFFER THYSELF TO BE COVERED BY THE DUST OF THEIR FEET,<sup>18</sup> AND DRINK IN THEIR WORDS WITH THIRST.

**MISHNAH 5.** JOSE B. JOHANAN (A MAN) OF JERUSALEM USED TO SAY: LET THY HOUSE BE WIDE OPEN, AND LET THE POOR BE

MEMBERS OF THY HOUSEHOLD,<sup>19</sup> ENGAGE NOT IN TOO MUCH CONVERSATION WITH WOMEN. THEY<sup>20</sup> SAID THIS WITH REGARD TO ONE'S OWN WIFE, HOW MUCH MORE [DOES THE RULE APPLY] WITH REGARD TO ANOTHER MAN'S WIFE. HENCE HAVE THE SAGES SAID:<sup>21</sup> AS LONG AS A MAN<sup>22</sup> ENGAGES IN TOO MUCH CONVERSATION WITH WOMEN, HE CAUSES EVIL TO HIMSELF, [FOR] HE GOES IDLE FROM [THE STUDY OF] THE WORDS OF THE TORAH, SO THAT HIS END WILL BE THAT HE WILL INHERIT GEHINNOM.<sup>23</sup>

**MISHNAH 6.** JOSHUA B. PERAHIAH<sup>24</sup> AND NITTAI<sup>25</sup> THE ARBELITE<sup>26</sup> RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM THEM [I.E. THE FOREGOING]. JOSHUA B. PERAHIAH USED TO SAY: APPOINT FOR THYSELF A TEACHER<sup>27</sup> AND ACQUIRE FOR THYSELF A COMPANION<sup>28</sup> AND JUDGE ALL MEN IN THE SCALE OF MERIT.<sup>29</sup>

**MISHNAH 7.** NITTAI THE ARBELITE USED TO SAY: KEEP AT A DISTANCE<sup>30</sup> FROM AN EVIL NEIGHBOR, DO NOT MAKE THYSELF AN ASSOCIATE OF A WICKED MAN,<sup>31</sup> NEITHER DO THOU ABANDON FAITH IN [DIVINE] RETRIBUTION.<sup>32</sup>

**MISHNAH 8.** JUDAH B. TABBAI AND SIMEON B. SHETAH<sup>33</sup> RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM THEM [I.E. THE FOREGOING]. JUDAH B. TABBAI SAID: DO THOU NOT [AS-A JUDGE] PLAY THE PART OF AN ADVOCATE;<sup>34</sup> WHILST THEY [I. E. THE PARTIES IN A LAWSUIT] ARE STANDING BEFORE THEE, LET THEM BE REGARDED BY THEE AS IF THEY WERE [BOTH OF THEM] GUILTY, AND WHEN THEY LEAVE THY PRESENCE, [AFTER] HAVING SUBMITTED TO THE JUDGMENT<sup>35</sup> LET THEM BE REGARDED BY THEE AS IF THEY WERE [BOTH OF THEM] GUILTLESS.

**MISHNAH 9.** SIMEON B. SHETAH<sup>36</sup> USED TO SAY: BE THOROUGH IN THE INTERROGATION OF WITNESSES, AND BE

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CAREFUL IN THY WORDS, LEST FROM THEM [I. E. FROM YOUR WORDS] THEY LEARN TO UTTER FALSEHOOD.<sup>37</sup>

**MISHNAH 10.** SHEMAIAH AND ABTALION<sup>38</sup> RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM THEM [I.E. THE FOREGOING]. SHEMAIAH USED TO SAY: LOVE WORK, HATE ACTING THE SUPERIOR, AND DO NOT BRING THYSELF TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE RULING AUTHORITY.

**MISHNAH 11.** ABTALION USED TO SAY: YE SAGES BE CAREFUL WITH YOUR WORDS,<sup>39</sup> LEST YE BE CONDEMNED TO EXILE,<sup>40</sup> AND YE BE EXILED TO A PLACE OF EVIL WATERS,<sup>41</sup> AND THE DISCIPLES WHO FOLLOW YOU<sup>42</sup> DRINK AND DIE,<sup>43</sup> WITH THE RESULT THAT THE NAME OF HEAVEN BECOMES PROFANED.<sup>44</sup>

**MISHNAH 12.** HILLEL AND SHAMMAI<sup>45</sup> RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM THEM [I.E. THE FOREGOING]. HILLEL USED TO SAY: BE THOU OF THE DISCIPLES OF AARON, LOVING PEACE AND PURSUING PEACE,<sup>46</sup> [BE THOU<sup>47</sup> ] ONE WHO LOVETH [ONE'S FELLOW.] CREATURES AND BRINGETH THEM NIGH TO THE TORAH.

**MISHNAH 13.** HE [ALSO] USED TO SAY: A NAME THAT IS WIDESPREAD LOSES ITS FAME; ONE WHO DOES NOT ADD [TO HIS KNOWLEDGE] CAUSES [IT] TO CEASE;<sup>48</sup> WHOEVER DOES NOT STUDY<sup>49</sup> [THE TORAH] DESERVES DEATH; WHOEVER MAKES [UNWORTHY] USE OF THE CROWN<sup>50</sup> [OF LEARNING] PASSETH AWAY.

**MISHNAH 14.** HE [ALSO] USED TO SAY: IF I AM NOT FOR MYSELF, WHO IS FOR ME, BUT IF I AM FOR MY OWN SELF [ONLY],<sup>51</sup> WHAT AM I, AND IF NOT NOW, WHEN?<sup>52</sup>

**MISHNAH 15.** SHAMMAI USED TO SAY: MAKE THY [STUDY OF THE] TORAH [A MATTER OF] ESTABLISHED [REGULARITY];<sup>53</sup> SPEAK LITTLE, BUT DO

MUCH; AND RECEIVE ALL MEN WITH A PLEASANT COUNTENANCE.<sup>54</sup>

**MISHNAH 16.** RABBAN GAMALIEL<sup>55</sup> USED TO SAY: APPOINT A TEACHER FOR THYSELF AND AVOID DOUBT,<sup>56</sup> AND MAKE NOT A HABIT OF TITHING BY GUESSWORK.<sup>57</sup>

**MISHNAH 17.** SIMEON, HIS SON,<sup>58</sup> USED TO SAY: ALL MY DAYS I GREW UP AMONG THE SAGES, AND I HAVE FOUND NOTHING BETTER FOR A PERSON<sup>59</sup> THAN SILENCE. STUDY IS NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING, BUT DEED; WHOEVER INDULGES IN TOO MANY WORDS BRINGS ABOUT SIN.<sup>60</sup>

**MISHNAH 18.** RABBAN SIMEON, SON OF GAMALIEL<sup>61</sup> USED TO SAY: ON THREE THINGS DOES THE WORLD STAND:<sup>62</sup> ON JUSTICE, ON TRUTH AND ON PEACE, AS IT IS SAID: JUDGE YE TRUTHFULLY AND A JUDGMENT OF PEACE IN YOUR GATES.<sup>63</sup>

(1) Scripture and its complementary Oral Instruction, with special reference to the latter.

(2) Lit., 'from'.

(3) Ch. I, 'Joshua received from Moses'. The transmission and reception were done orally. All evidence goes to show that there was a continuous succession of 'schools' headed by the Elders, prophets and scribes of their respective generations, which maintained and developed the theoretical study and practical application of the Torah. For a full examination of the terms מִסְרָה (transmitted) and קִבֻּלָה (received) v. Bacher, Tradition und Tradenten, p. 1.

(4) The Elders that outlived Joshua, Judges II, 7. 'Elders' in this Mishnah includes the Judges.

(5) Keneseth Hagedolah: A body of 120 men founded by the leaders of the Jews who returned from the Babylonian captivity.

(6) Whereby reverence for, the knowledge of, and the inviolability of the Torah might be secured (cf. Rashi).

(7) The Torah is conceived as a garden and its precepts as precious plants. Such a garden is fenced round for the purpose of obviating willful or even unintended damage. Likewise, the precepts of the Torah were to be 'fenced' round with additional inhibitions that should have the effect of preserving the original commandments from trespass.

(8) Son of Onias. According to the older authorities, also Frankel, Graetz and Halevy, it was Simeon b.

Onias I (ca. 300 B.C.E.) referred to in Sirach, Ch. I, and Josephus Ant. XII, 2, 5; 4, 1. Others (e.g. Krochmal, Brull) say it was Simeon b. Onias II (219-199 B.C.E.). Halevy says it could not have been the latter, as he could not have been designated ha-Zaddik (the Righteous), and that, in fact, the elder Simeon b. Onias (I) was not so designated until later times, when it became necessary to distinguish the worthy grandfather from the unworthy grandson.

(9) Some commentators cite Ps. LXXXIX, 3 עולם חסד נבנה (the usual translation of which is forever is Mercy built) taking עולם as meaning world, and rendering the world is built on kindness. גמילות חסדים is enumerated in another old Mishnah (Pe'ah I, 1) among 'the things the fruits of which a man enjoys in this world, while the stock remains intact for him for the world to come'.

(10) The first noted Jew known to have had a Greek name. First half of the third century B.C.E.

(11) Josh. XV, 35. I Sam. XVII, 1.

(12) 'Gratuity' rather than 'reward' (for which שכר would have been used and not פרס) since a servant may rightly and without reproach expect and accept his wage (v. M.).

(13) The term was used before the Persian and Greek periods (Marmorstein, A., The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God, p. 14 and pp. 105-6), as against the view that 'Heaven' for God, in Jewish literature is an expression derived from the Greek, as Bousset, Die Religion des Judentums, p. 359, n. 3).

(14) 'Antigonus' trilogy was directed against Epicurean teachings; the first and second sayings against the eudaemonist doctrine that all action, even specifically moral action, should be undertaken for the purpose of creating happiness for oneself; the third, against the Epicurean doctrine that whereas there are gods, these gods do not concern themselves with the doings of men,' (Frankel, op. cit. pp. 8-9).

(15) Short form of Joseph.

(16) I Kings XI, 26.

(17) Called Hasid Shebikehunnah, 'the most saintly man in the Priesthood'. Hag. II, 7.

(18) Either: let the dust of the feet of the Sages, as they walk, cover you (i.e., follow them closely), or, sit in the dust (on the ground) at their feet whilst they teach. The two Jose's were the first of the Zugoth, GR.\*\* 'pairs' of scholars (one a Nasi, Prince, President, Patriarch; the other Ab-Beth-din, Father of the Court) referred to in Pe'ah II, 6 (as Zugoth) and Hag. II, 2 (by their names as here). How did the Zugoth arise? Weiss, op. cit. p. 103: it is a reversion to an earlier practice, the first sign of which (v. ob. p. 35) is the dual appointment in II Chron. XIX, 5-11. Bacher, op. cit. p. 48 ff. points out that there were Zugoth from Moses onwards. Frankel, op. cit., p. 32: When Hellenistic High Priests rose to power and became a menace to Judaism, it was felt that two leaders would be able to cope with the situation

better than one. Halevy, op. cit., p. 199: Simeon the Righteous was succeeded by his brother Eleazar, as High Priest, but not as Head of Sanhedrin. This dignity devolved on Antigonus who was followed by Jose b. Johanan. Eleazar was followed (in the High Priesthood) by Onias II (another son of Simeon the Righteous) who handed over the civil power to the Tobiads. The latter disregarded the Sanhedrin and, exercising a powerful influence over the court of the King of Egypt, carried on in a high-handed way. The Sanhedrin then found it necessary to appoint, in addition to the Ab-Beth-din, a Nasi who should represent the Sanhedrin vis-a-vis the people, and as first Nasi they appointed Jose ben Jo'ezer, a younger disciple of Antigonus, who was both a scholar and of eminent priestly descent.

(19) Either: treat the poor as members of your own family or, employ poor men (rather than slaves) as servants (so Rashi and Maim.). The commentary Ez Joseph renders: 'let the members of thy family be poor', i.e. content themselves with poorer fare, so that you may be able to keep an open door and hospitable table for strangers.

(20) What follows is the addition of the Redactor of the Mishnah. Herford, p. 24 reads אמרו 'He (Jose) said it.'

(21) The term מכאן אמרו חכמים points to an ancient Mishnah. (Frankel, op. cit., p. 305.) For a full examination of the term see Bacher, op. cit. p. 160 and p. 171 ff.

(22) The P. B. version has 'whoever'.

(23) V. infra V, 20, notes.

(24) According to Sotah 470 (ed. Amsterdam), also MS. Brit. Mus. Or. 1389 (a collection of Haggadic writings) fol. 158a, line 28 ff, he fled to Alexandria owing to Sadducee hostility but was recalled later by Simeon b. Shetah (v. Mish. 8) when 'peace' was restored. But J. Hag. 77d reports this of Judah b. Tabbai.

(25) Mattai. J. Hag. 76d has מתי or נתי.

(26) Arbel. Hosea XI, 14. In Galilee, v. I Mace. IX, 2.

(27) Cf. Mish. 16. II ARN, Ch. XVIII. רב להכמה explained as a master to supply one with knowledge already existing.

(28) II ARN, ibid. חבר למשנה explained as a companion for studying together, so that one may be able to note what the other misses, or to supply information not known to the other.

(29) Frankel, op. cit. p. 35, says Joshua b. Perahiah said this when John Hyrcanus was still with the Pharisees, with whom he later broke after Eleazar b. Po'irah made mischief over the demand made by the Pharisees, that John Hyrcanus should content himself with the crown, and relinquish the High Priesthood, for which, they said, he was unfit on account of his mother having been (as they alleged) once taken captive at Modin. The allegation was disproved and the king turned against the Pharisees.



(Sotah 47a. Frankel and Weiss take ינאי there to be John Hyrcanus rather than Alexander Jannaeus.) II ARN attributes the sayings given here as Joshua b. Perahiah's to Nittai.

(30) II ARN, 'Run away'.

(31) As one might be tempted to do should one see the wicked prosper.

(32) Wickedness will not succeed in the end. Frankel *ibid.*: Nittai said this after John Hyrcanus joined the Sadducees. In ARN this is attributed to Joshua b. Perahiah.

(33) J. Hag 77d states that in later times there was disagreement as to whether Judah b. Tabbai was Nasi, and Simeon b. Shetah Ab-Beth-din, or vice-versa. Frankel, *op. cit.* p. 37, says: 'at first Judah was Nasi, but after his mistaken decision in the case of a false witness ('Ed Zomen v. Mak. 5b) he resigned in favor of Simeon and thus they changed posts.' These scholars lived in the reigns of John Hyrcanus, Alexander Jannaeus and Queen Salome. II ARN attributes Judah's sayings to Simeon and vice-versa.

(34) I.e., do not suggest to either party a line of argument. For a case involving the question of the applicability of this principle see J. B.B. IX, 6; J. Keth. IV, 10. A woman came before R. Johanan with a claim on her husband (or her late husband's heirs) for the cost of medical attention during her illness, and R. Johanan said to her: 'If the sum has been previously agreed upon with the physician you cannot recover it from your husband (or from his estate), but it must come out of your marriage-settlement.' Otherwise it is included in the husband's alimentation obligation to the wife, v. Epstein, M., *Marriage Contract*, 163. Objection was taken to R. Johanan for having said this, as being at variance with the dictum here in Aboth, which had been interpreted by R. Haggai in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi as: 'It is prohibited (for a judge) to reveal to any one litigant the law as it applies to his case.' This objection is answered thus: R. Johanan knew that this applicant was a woman of high principles who would not take unfair advantage of that knowledge, but tell the truth as to whether the sum of the physician's fee had been a pre-arranged one or not. I and II ARN take this in a quite different sense, viz. advice against allowing oneself to be prejudiced by any considerations, and against treating one party differently to the other. ARN seems to understand עורכי הדינים to mean judges who estimate' and make up their minds by conjecture before they have heard the whole case.

(35) This is the best translation of כשקבלי and gives the best sense; it is only when a litigant has submitted to the decision that he can be considered guiltless, but not if he is recalcitrant. (V. Buchler, *op. cit.* p. 53, n. 4.)

(36) Brother of Queen Salome. He reinstated the Pharisees in the Sanhedrin which had, for some time, been dominated by the Sadducees.

(37) It is suggested that the tragic episode that led to the execution of his own son, which had been due to reliance on evidence which (when it was too late) proved to have been false (v. J. Sanh. 23b), prompted this dictum.

(38) Said to have been descendants of proselytes, themselves descendants of Sennacherib.

(39) II ARN, ch. XXIII, amplifies 'lest you teach anything not in accordance with the teachings of the Torah'. M.: Inexact language would give heretics an opportunity for misrepresenting your teaching. Halevy: Abtalion supplemented Shemaiah's advice: be careful even in your words, so as not to embroil yourselves with the rival sides.

(40) By the Sadducees and Hellenists (who had regained power at the Court), as had already happened in the cases of Joshua b. Perahiah and Judah b. Tabbai.

(41) A place of heretical teachings (e.g. Alexandria).

(42) Into exile.

(43) Spiritual death.

(44) By reason of the spiritual disaster that will have overtaken students of the Torah, faith in, and reverence for, God would wane.

(45) Identified by Halevy, *op. cit.* p. 40 ff. (and others) with Sameas and Pollion of Jos. Ant. XIV, 9, 4; XV, 1, 1; XV, 10, 4. V. Bacher, *Tradition*, pp. 51-2, who identifies similarly but, owing to chronological difficulties created by the Josephus passages, he suggests that on account of the similarity, especially in Greek pronunciation, of Shemaiah and Shammai, Josephus did not keep the two pairs (Shemaiah-Abtalion and Hillel-Shammai) sufficiently distinct.

(46) For the qualities of the ideal priest, v. Mal. II, 6.

(47) So MV, p. 473. i.e. this is not a continuation of the description of Aaron, or of Aaron's disciples, but a further admonition by Hillel.

(48) Or, (himself) ceases (to be).

(49) Another reading 'teach', i.e., one who refuses to impart the knowledge he has.

(50) 1. The Shem Ha-meforash, the Name of God in its full form (I ARN, Ch. XII). 2. 'The Crown of God', i.e., a man who claims divine honors and prerogatives (II ARN, Ch. XXVII).

(51) One must be self-reliant and not accustom oneself to depend on others; but, being exclusively for oneself is an unworthy attitude for a human being. M.: If I do not rouse my soul to higher things who will rouse it? Rashi: If I do not acquire merit for myself who should do it for me, and when I have already achieved that, have I even then done the whole of my duty? L.: If my ego is not mine (i.e. under my control) over whom can I exercise influence, and when I have myself to myself (and I examine myself) I am led to ask myself, what am I?

(52) If I do not act in accordance with these reflections now that I realize them (or now whilst I am young, or alive), then, when? Later it may be too late.

(53) L.: Ideal conditions for study are fixity of purpose, regularity of habits and stability of temperament on the part of the student, as well as an habitual locale and students' accessories of suitable and standard types. B. cites another rendering, viz., 'Make thy (decisions in) Law consistent'.

(54) This advice on the part of Shammai is the more noteworthy in view of his own impatient nature (as compared with Hillel's at any rate).

(55) Son of Simeon (who was Nasi after his father Hillel, according to Graetz for 20 years, but according to Halevy only a very short time), known as Rabban Gamaliel Ha-zaken (the Elder). Although here he follows Hillel and Shammai, he is not said to have received' (the oral teaching) from them (that is said of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai, supra II, 5) and this leads some to say that he was not a Nasi. Hoffmann (Erste Mishnah, p. 26) says the dictum here is by R. Gamaliel II (of Jabneh). Geiger adheres to Gamaliel I. It is probably the same Gamaliel ('a doctor of the Law') as in Acts V, 34; XXII, 3.

(56) According to M. and others this is advice to one who is himself a Rabbi, that he should choose another scholar whom he is to respect as a greater authority, and whom he should consult in cases of difficulty and doubt before giving a decision.

(57) L.: To be too strict is one's decision (a course a Rabbi would be likely to take when he is in doubt) is a fault, even as it is wrong to give more than is due in tithes by tithing by conjecture instead of by measure.

(58) I.e., the son of R. Gamaliel I. He was slain at the time of the fall of Jerusalem. He is not called Rabban here, because he said this before he was Nasi.

(59) Heb. גוף body, person, cf. IV, 6.

(60) Cf. Prov. X, 19.

(61) Son of Gamaliel II of Jabneh and grandson of the Simeon in the foregoing Mishnah. Others say it is that same Simeon but one dictum was uttered before, and the other (here) after, he became Nasi (hence the title Rabban here).

(62) Is its stability founded; cf. Mishnah 2.

(63) Zech. VIII, 16. Rashi says that in the Mishnah of Tiberias (MV, 'in careful texts') the Scriptural quotation is not given.

[ACCRUES] TO HIM FROM MEN.<sup>3</sup> AND BE THOU CAREFUL WITH A LIGHT PRECEPT<sup>4</sup> AS WITH A GRAVE ONE, FOR THOU KNOWEST NOT THE GRANT OF REWARD [FOR THE FULFILLMENT] OF PRECEPTS.<sup>5</sup> ALSO, RECKON THE LOSS [THAT MAY BE SUSTAINED THROUGH THE FULFILLMENT] OF A PRECEPT AGAINST THE REWARD [ACCRUING] THEREFROM, AND THE GAIN [THAT MAY BE OBTAINED THROUGH THE COMMITTING] OF A TRANSGRESSION AGAINST THE LOSS [ENTAILED] THEREBY.<sup>6</sup> APPLY THY MIND<sup>7</sup> TO THREE THINGS AND THOU WILT NOT COME INTO THE POWER OF SIN:<sup>8</sup> KNOW WHAT<sup>9</sup> THERE IS ABOVE THEE:<sup>10</sup> AN EYE THAT SEES,<sup>11</sup> AN EAR THAT HEARS,<sup>12</sup> AND ALL THY DEEDS WRITTEN IN A BOOK.<sup>13</sup>

**MISHNAH 2.** RABBAN GAMALIEL THE SON OF R. JUDAH THE PATRIARCH<sup>14</sup> SAID: EXCELLENT IS THE STUDY OF THE TORAH TOGETHER WITH A WORLDLY OCCUPATION,<sup>15</sup> FOR THE ENERGY [TAKEN UP] BY BOTH OF THEM KEEPS SIN OUT OF ONE'S MIND; AND [AS FOR] ALL [STUDY OF THE] TORAH WHERE THERE IS NO WORLDLY OCCUPATION, THE END THEREOF [IS THAT] IT COMES TO NAUGHT<sup>16</sup> AND BRINGS SIN IN ITS TRAIN;<sup>17</sup> AND ALL WHO LABOR WITH THE COMMUNITY, LET THEM LABOR WITH THEM FOR THE [SAKE OF THE] NAME OF HEAVEN,<sup>18</sup> FOR THE MERIT OF THEIR<sup>19</sup> FATHERS SUSTAINS THEM<sup>20</sup> , AND THEIR RIGHTEOUSNESS ENDURES FOR EVER;<sup>21</sup> AND AS FOR YOU, [GOD<sup>22</sup> IN SUCH CASE SAYS] I ACCOUNT YOU WORTHY OF MUCH REWARD, AS IF YOU [YOURSELVES] HAD [ACTUALLY] ACCOMPLISHED [IT ALL].<sup>23</sup>

## Avoth Chapter 2

**MISHNAH 1.** RABBI<sup>1</sup> SAID: WHICH IS THE RIGHT WAY THAT A MAN SHOULD CHOOSE UNTO HIMSELF? ONE WHICH IS [ITSELF] AN HONOR TO THE PERSON ADOPTING IT,<sup>2</sup> AND [ON ACCOUNT OF WHICH] HONOR

**MISHNAH 3.** BE YE CIRCUMSPECT [IN YOUR DEALINGS] WITH THE RULING AUTHORITIES<sup>24</sup> FOR THEY SUFFER NOT A MAN TO BE NEAR THEM EXCEPT IT BE FOR THEIR OWN REQUIREMENT; THEY SHOW THEMSELVES AS FRIENDS WHEN IT IS TO THEIR OWN INTEREST, BUT THEY DO NOT

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STAND BY A MAN IN THE HOUR OF HIS DISTRESS.<sup>25</sup>

**MISHNAH 4.** HE USED TO SAY: DO HIS WILL AS [THOU WOULDST DO]<sup>26</sup> THINE OWN WILL,<sup>27</sup> SO THAT HE MAY DO THY WILL AS [HE DOES] HIS [OWN] WILL.<sup>28</sup> SET ASIDE THY WILL IN THE FACE OF HIS WILL,<sup>29</sup> SO THAT HE MAY SET ASIDE THE WILL OF OTHERS<sup>30</sup> BEFORE THY WILL. HILLEL SAID: SEPARATE NOT THYSELF FROM THE COMMUNITY,<sup>31</sup> NEITHER TRUST THOU IN THYSELF UNTIL THE DAY OF THY DEATH,<sup>32</sup> MOREOVER JUDGE NOT THY FELLOW-MAN UNTIL THOU HAST REACHED HIS PLACE.<sup>33</sup> SAY NOT A THING THAT CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD<sup>34</sup> [AT ONCE], [TRUSTING] THAT IN THE END IT WILL BE UNDERSTOOD. SAY NOT: WHEN I SHALL HAVE LEISURE I SHALL STUDY;’ PERHAPS THOU WILT NOT HAVE LEISURE.<sup>35</sup>

**MISHNAH 5.** HE USED TO SAY: AN UNCULTURED<sup>36</sup> PERSON IS NOT SIN-FEARING,<sup>37</sup> NEITHER IS AN IGNORANT<sup>38</sup> PERSON PIOUS; [IT IS] NOT A SHAMEFACED PERSON [WHO IS APT TO] LEARN, NOR [IS IT] AN IMPATIENT PERSON [WHO IS FITTED TO] TEACH, NOR [IS IT] EVERYONE<sup>39</sup> WHO ENGAGES MUCH<sup>40</sup> IN BUSINESS [THAT] BECOMES WISE.<sup>41</sup> IN A PLACE WHERE THERE ARE NO MEN, STRIVE THOU TO BE A MAN.<sup>42</sup>

**MISHNAH 6.** HE ALSO SAW A SKULL FLOATING ON THE FACE OF THE WATER. HE SAID TO IT: BECAUSE THOU DIDST DROWN [OTHERS] THEY<sup>43</sup> DROWNED THEE, AND THE END OF THOSE THAT DROWNED THEE [WILL BE THAT] THEY WILL BE DROWNED.<sup>44</sup>

**MISHNAH 7.** HE USED TO SAY: THE MORE FLESH,<sup>45</sup> THE MORE WORMS;<sup>46</sup> THE MORE PROPERTY, THE MORE ANXIETY;<sup>47</sup> THE MORE WIVES, THE MORE WITCHCRAFT;<sup>48</sup> THE MORE BONDWOMEN THE MORE LEWDNESS;<sup>49</sup> THE MORE SLAVES, THE

MORE ROBBERY;<sup>50</sup> [BUT] THE MORE [STUDY OF THE] TORAH, THE MORE LIFE;<sup>51</sup> THE MORE SITTING DOWN<sup>52</sup> [TO STUDY AND CONTEMPLATE], THE MORE WISDOM;<sup>53</sup> THE MORE COUNSEL, THE MORE UNDERSTANDING;<sup>54</sup> THE MORE RIGHTEOUSNESS,<sup>55</sup> THE MORE PEACE. ONE WHO HAS ACQUIRED UNTO HIMSELF A GOOD NAME,<sup>56</sup> HAS ACQUIRED [IT] FOR HIMSELF;<sup>57</sup> ONE WHO HAS ACQUIRED UNTO HIMSELF WORDS OF TORAH, HAS ACQUIRED FOR HIMSELF THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME.<sup>58</sup>

**MISHNAH 8.** RABBAH JOHANAN B. ZAKKAI RECEIVED [THE ORAL TRADITION] FROM HILLEL AND SHAMMAI.<sup>59</sup> HE USED TO SAY: IF THOU HAST LEARNT<sup>60</sup> MUCH TORAH, DO NOT CLAIM CREDIT UNTO THYSELF, BECAUSE FOR SUCH [PURPOSE] WAST THOU CREATED.<sup>61</sup> RABBAN JOHANAN B. ZAKKAI HAD FIVE [PRE-EMINENT] DISCIPLES AND THEY WERE THESE: R. ELIEZER B. HYRCANUS, R. JOSHUA B. HANANIAH, R. JOSE, THE PRIEST, R. SIMEON B. NETHANEEL AND R. ELEAZAR B. ‘ARACH. HE [I. E. R. JOHANAN] USED TO RECOUNT THEIR [FOREMOST] QUALITIES:<sup>62</sup> R. ELIEZER B. HYRCANUS IS A PLASTERED CISTERN WHICH LOSES NOT A DROP;<sup>63</sup> R. JOSHUA B. HANANIAH — HAPPY IS SHE THAT BARE HIM;<sup>64</sup> R. JOSE, THE PRIEST, IS A PIOUS MAN;<sup>65</sup> R. SIMEON B. NETHANEEL IS ONE THAT FEARS SIN,<sup>66</sup> AND R. ELEAZAR B. ‘ARACH IS LIKE UNTO A SPRING THAT [EVER] GATHERS FORCE.<sup>67</sup> HE [I. E. R. JOHANAN] USED TO SAY: IF ALL THE SAGES OF ISRAEL WERE IN ONE SCALE OF THE BALANCE AND ELIEZER B. HYRCANUS IN THE OTHER SCALE, HE WOULD OUTWEIGH THEM ALL. ABBA<sup>68</sup> SAUL SAID IN HIS<sup>69</sup> NAME: IF ALL THE SAGES OF ISRAEL WERE IN ONE SCALE OF THE BALANCE, AND R. ELIEZER B. HYRCANUS ALSO WITH THEM, AND R. ELEAZAR B. ARACH IN THE OTHER SCALE, HE WOULD OUTWEIGH THEM ALL.<sup>70</sup>

# OVOS

**MISHNAH 9.** HE [R. JOHANAN] SAID UNTO THEM: GO FORTH<sup>71</sup> AND OBSERVE WHICH IS THE GOOD WAY UNTO WHICH A MAN SHOULD CLEAVE? R. ELIEZER SAID, A GOOD EYE;<sup>72</sup> R. JOSHUA SAID, A GOOD ASSOCIATE;<sup>73</sup> R. JOSE SAID, A GOOD NEIGHBOR;<sup>74</sup> R. SIMEON SAID, ONE WHO LOOKS [AHEAD TO SEE] WHAT [CONSEQUENCES] SHALL BE BROUGHT FORTH [BY HIS OWN ACTIONS].<sup>75</sup> R. ELEAZAR SAID, A GOOD HEART.<sup>76</sup> SAID HE [R. JOHANAN] UNTO THEM: I PREFER THE WORDS OF ELEAZAR B. 'ARACH TO YOUR WORDS, FOR WITHIN THE COMPREHENSIVE CHARACTER OF HIS WORDS, ARE YOUR WORDS [INCLUDED]. HE [FURTHER] SAID UNTO THEM: GO FORTH AND OBSERVE WHICH IS THE EVIL WAY FROM WHICH A MAN SHOULD REMOVE HIMSELF FAR?<sup>77</sup> R. ELIEZER SAID, AN EVIL EYE;<sup>78</sup> R. JOSHUA SAID, AN EVIL ASSOCIATE; R. JOSE SAID, AN EVIL NEIGHBOR; R. SIMEON SAID, ONE WHO BORROWS AND REPAYS NOT<sup>79</sup> — [IT IS ALL] ONE [WHETHER] ONE BORROWS FROM MAN OR ONE BORROWS FROM THE ALL-PRESENT<sup>80</sup> — AS IT IS SAID: THE WICKED BORROWS AND PAYETH NOT; BUT THE RIGHTEOUS DEALETH GRACIOUSLY AND GIVETH<sup>81</sup>. R. ELEAZAR SAID, AN EVIL HEART. SAID HE [R. JOHANAN] UNTO THEM: I PREFER THE WORDS OF ELEAZAR B. ARACH TO YOUR WORDS, FOR WITHIN THE COMPREHENSIVE CHARACTER OF HIS WORDS ARE YOUR WORDS [INCLUDED].

**MISHNAH 10.** THEY [EACH] SAID THREE THINGS. R. ELIEZER SAID: LET THE HONOR OF THY FRIEND BE AS DEAR TO THEE AS THINE OWN;<sup>82</sup> AND BE NOT EASILY PROVOKED TO ANGER;<sup>83</sup> AND REPENT ONE DAY BEFORE THY DEATH,<sup>84</sup> AND [HE ALSO SAID:] WARM THYSELF BEFORE THE FIRE OF THE WISE,<sup>85</sup> AND BEWARE OF THEIR GLOWING COALS,<sup>86</sup> THAT THOU MAYEST NOT BE SINGED,<sup>87</sup> FOR THEIR BITE IS THE BITE OF A FOX,<sup>88</sup> AND THEIR STING IS THE STING OF A SCORPION,<sup>89</sup> AND THEIR HISS IS

THE HISS OF A SERPENT,<sup>90</sup> AND ALL THEIR WORDS ARE LIKE COALS OF FIRE.<sup>91</sup>

**MISHNAH 11.** R. JOSHUA SAID: AN EVIL EYE, THE EVIL INCLINATION,<sup>92</sup> AND HATRED FOR [ONE'S FELLOW.] CREATURES PUT A MAN OUT OF THE WORLD.<sup>93</sup>

**MISHNAH 12.** R. JOSE SAID: LET THE PROPERTY OF THY FELLOW BE AS PRECIOUS UNTO THEE AS THINE OWN;<sup>94</sup> FIT THYSELF TO STUDY TORAH<sup>95</sup> FOR IT IS NOT [A THING THAT COMES] UNTO THEE [AS] AN INHERITANCE;<sup>96</sup> AND LET ALL THINE ACTIONS<sup>97</sup> BE FOR [THE SAKE OF] THE NAME OF HEAVEN<sup>98</sup>.

**MISHNAH 13.** R. SIMEON SAID: BE CAREFUL WITH THE READING OF SHEMA'<sup>99</sup> AND WITH PRAYER,<sup>100</sup> AND WHEN THOU PRAYEST, MAKE NOT THY PRAYER A SET TASK,<sup>101</sup> BUT [AN APPEAL FOR] MERCY<sup>102</sup> AND AN ENTREATY BEFORE THE ALL-PRESENT,<sup>103</sup> FOR IT IS SAID: FOR HE IS GRACIOUS AND COMPASSIONATE, LONG-SUFFERING AND ABUNDANT IN MERCY, AND REPENTETH HIM OF THE EVIL;<sup>104</sup> AND BE NOT WICKED IN THINE OWN ESTEEM.<sup>105</sup>

**MISHNAH 14.** R. ELEAZAR SAID:<sup>106</sup> BE EAGER<sup>107</sup> TO STUDY THE TORAH;<sup>108</sup> AND KNOW<sup>109</sup> WHAT ANSWER THOU SHOULDST GIVE TO THE EPICUREAN,<sup>110</sup> AND KNOW BEFORE WHOM THOU TOLLEST,<sup>111</sup> AND WHO<sup>112</sup> IS THINE EMPLOYER<sup>113</sup> WHO WILL PAY THEE THE REWARD OF THY LABOR.

**MISHNAH 15.** R. TARFON<sup>114</sup> SAID: THE DAY<sup>115</sup> IS SHORT, AND THE WORK<sup>116</sup> [TO BE PERFORMED] IS MUCH;<sup>117</sup> AND THE WORKMEN<sup>118</sup> ARE INDOLENT,<sup>119</sup> BUT THE REWARD IS MUCH;<sup>120</sup> AND THE MASTER OF THE HOUSE<sup>121</sup> IS INSISTENT.<sup>122</sup>

**MISHNAH 16.** HE [I.E., R. TARFON] USED TO SAY: IT IS NOT [INCUMBENT] UPON THEE TO FINISH THE WORK, BUT NEITHER ART THOU A FREE MAN SO AS TO [BE ENTITLED



**TO] REFRAIN THEREFROM;<sup>123</sup> IF THOU HAST STUDIED MUCH TORAH, THEY<sup>124</sup> GIVE THEE MUCH REWARD, AND FAITHFUL IS THINE EMPLOYER TO PAY THEE THE REWARD OF THY LABOR;<sup>125</sup> AND KNOW THAT THE GRANT OF REWARD UNTO THE RIGHTEOUS IS IN THE TIME TO COME.<sup>126</sup>**

(1) Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi (the Prince, the Patriarch) also called רבינו הקדוש 'Our holy Master'. All the best qualities characteristic of the righteous were combined in him (J. Sanh. 30a). Son of Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel (supra I, 28) ca. 200 C.E. He is famous as the one who, either orally (so Rashi), or in writing (so M.). compiled, or reduced to order, previously collected material (so Tosaf.), consisting of the authoritative opinions of the Tannaim on legal, ritual, ethical and related matters, and forming our Mishnah (v. L.). Among the modern historians, Weiss (II, p. 183) says that R. Judah collected, arranged and reduced to writing. Halevy (II, pp. 829, 858, 866) says the original Mishnah was the work of the Great Synagogue. That 'Ur,' Mishnah was sifted and clarified progressively by Hillel and Shammai and their successors. The Mishnah was all but complete before the end of the days of R. Simeon b. Gamaliel. As the latter held office for a very short time only, it fell to his son R. Judah to add the final touches. Actual additions made in R. Judah's own time were very few.

(2) לעשה or לעשיה R. Jonah, Elijah Wilna, and others understand 'to Him who made it (the way)', i.e. God. They seem to have taken דרך ישרה to have been suggested by ישרים דרכי ה the ways of the Lord are right (Hos. XIV, 10), cf. Prov. XVI, 9. A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps. Taylor, Sayings of the Jewish Fathers, a.l. cites an interpretation of R. Isaac bar Shelomo which, rejecting the possibility of applying the verb עשה to דרך (Taylor says 'but see Judg. XVII, 8.' However, there the expression is used in quite a different sense), assumes a reading לעשהו 'to his (man's) Maker'. The passage would in that case express the idea in for them that honor Me [will honor (I Sam. II, 30), cf. infra IV, 1.

(3) Elijah Wilna quotes Prov. III, 4, So shalt thou find grace and good favor in the sight of God and Man.

(4) A precept, compliance with which does not entail any, or much, exertion or cost, or the reward (where known), or punishment for which is slight (L.).

(5) I.e., positive precepts; the penalties for non-compliance with negative precepts are known. II ARN, Ch. XXXII, adds, 'and flee from a light transgression as from a grave one for thou knowest

not what are the penalties for transgressions' (sc. of positive precepts).

(6) Does this metaphor, taken evidently from commercial life, not indicate the principle of the 'double-entry' system of book-keeping, which is usually stated to have been devised in the 16th century?

(7) הסתכל denom. vb. From שכל sense, mind.

(8) Lit., 'into the hands,' into the grip of sin, out of which there may be no escape.

(9) Lowe's MS. (used by Taylor) omits מה.

(10) MV understands 'in Heaven'. L.: 'beyond thy comprehension'.

(11) Cf. Job XXXIV, 21, 22. For His eyes are upon the ways of a man, and He seeth all his doings.

(12) For God's ear, cf. II Kings XIX, 16, Incline Thine ear, O Lord, and hear; Ps. CXVI, 2, He hath inclined his ear unto me.

(13) V. Job XXXVII, 7, He sealeth up the hand of every man, that all men whom He hath made may know it. This is rendered 'By the hand of every man is a seal (or signature) affixed so that He may know the deeds of all men (or, so that every man may know his own deeds). For the idea of a Heavenly Book of Records, cf. Mal. III, 16, also Ex. XXXII, 32. Dan. VII, 10. For the amplification of this idea and its implications, v. R.H., 16b ff.

(14) 'Rabbi' of the foregoing Mishnah.

(15) Cf. Ps. CXXVIII, 2, then thou eatest the labor of thy hands, happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. L. takes דרך ארץ in its sense of correct and unassuming conduct. However, the words immediately following, 'the energy (lit. labor) of both of them,' precludes such a rendering.

(16) L.: Since, on account of not having an occupation by which to earn a steady livelihood, he has to seek the latter at random, he thus uses up time which he could otherwise have devoted to the study of the Torah.

(17) Unable to procure a livelihood by honest means, he would be tempted, or driven to, dishonest means of obtaining it.

(18) I.e., disinterestedly and devotedly, not for the sake of self-aggrandizement or of exercising authority over others. Or, even if your actions are unpopular with the community.

(19) The community's.

(20) The community. L.: the communal workers.

(21) Even if the community do not readily support, or even if they oppose the labors of those who are doing the communal work for the sake of Heaven, the merit of the community's fathers, i.e., the traditional righteousness and charitableness of the Israelite character, being ever enduring, will sustain the workers (or the community as a whole) and help them to acquit themselves of their duty, in the end, creditably. even if for the time being the community may be doing it unwillingly (after an alternative in

B.). Another interpretation: One should take up the communal burden disinterestedly and not take credit for what one does; rather put it down to the merit of the community as a whole, as it is their inherited qualities which are mainly responsible for the consummation of the good work.

(22) Baer suggests it may mean the Tanna himself (Rabban Gamaliel) addressing these words to the communal leaders of his own generation.

(23) Rashi: Even if you have not completed the task (cf. Mishnah 16). Some explain: If in the course of public duty you have unavoidably neglected a precept. I account it to you as if you had fulfilled it.

(24) R. Gamaliel had much experience of intercourse with the (Roman) powers-that-be as his father, R. Judah ha-Nasi, was on intimate and friendly terms with one of the Antoninus. B. and others: This caution was particularly intended for the communal leaders addressed in the preceding Mishnah.

(25) This is generally taken as a reflection upon corrupt and grasping officialdom. It also reflects the conception prevailing among the ruling classes of antiquity as to their own *raison d'etre*; they took it for granted that they might make whatever use they could of their subjects, but they did not consider it an integral part of their duty to be of service to their subjects.

(26) As willingly and as joyfully.

(27) So B., L. and R. Jonah who further develop the idea, 'make thy will identical with God's will'. Rashi: 'even when thou doest thine own business do it for the sake of Heaven' but this would presuppose reading עשה רצונך כרצונו.

(28) Cf. Ps. CXLV, 19, He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him.

(29) When they conflict.

(30) Who will things against your interests. MV and B. also give an alternative explanation, viz., that 'the will of others' is an euphemism for His (God's) will, i.e., that he may annul any punishment decreed by Him against you. (V. Jast. s.v. ביל)

(31) Identify yourself with the community in everything except wrong-doing. (i) Participate in its sorrows as well as its joys, cf. Isa. LXVI, 10. (ii) Do not lead a selfish life or that of a recluse. (iii) Do not act independently of, or contrary to, what is the norm accepted by the community as a whole. L.: The Mishnah having given R. Gamaliel's dictum on duty towards the community quotes also Hillel on the subject.

(32) Do not rely upon the material or spiritual position you have attained. Unless one is constantly on one's guard these may only too easily be lost. Or construe the Mishnah thus: 'Separate not thyself from the Community, neither trust thou in thyself, until the day of thy death,' i.e., do not, ever in your life, rely on your own powers to the extent of

deliberately remaining detached from the community. Cf. I, 24.

(33) Rashi, B. 'When you see a man succumbing to temptation do not condemn him, until, faced by a similar temptation, you have overcome it.' R. Jonah says this follows on 'do not trust in thyself', do not, through thinking yourself infallible, presume to judge and condemn another, in particular a man who has reached a high position and appears to you not to be acting correctly; if and when you reach his position and you experience the psychological effects of high office upon its holder, it will be time enough for you to come to conclusions on the conduct of others in such a position.

(34) Lit., 'heard'. 'that cannot;' according to the reading of M., whose explanation is adopted in this translation. Others (adopting the same reading) 'do not reveal secrets (or secret, esoteric, doctrines) that should not be revealed to all and sundry, because in the end, they will become public.' Another reading: 'that can be heard' is explained by MV, Rashi, B.: 'When you have the opportunity of hearing Torah do not say there is yet time to hear it later.' Cf. the next sentence.

(35) Cf. prov. XXVII, 1, Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

(36) Originally: a piece of ground altogether uncultivated. Of a person: one devoid of knowledge as well as of ethical principles (M. and others).

(37) He may avoid sin by unreasonably following the accepted standards of conduct, or out of a fear of the consequences, but not out of a conscious and deliberate abhorrence of sin itself (after L.).

(38) עם הארץ A man devoid of mental attainments but possessing some moral qualities (M.). He may act with propriety but, lacking a knowledge of the Torah and the advantage of association with scholarly and saintly men, he is not equipped for rising to the plane of Hasiduth, which is conduct of a standard higher than that strictly required, and a striving for progressive self-perfection. (MV, L.)

(39) כל.... So Tosaf. Yom Tob.

(40) And leaves little or no time for study (R. Jonah).

(41) Even though business is, admittedly, a valuable factor in the development of the mind, it is not, except perhaps in rare cases, in itself sufficient. Cf. infra VI, 5, where among the qualifications for the acquisition of the Torah, some texts have מיעוט סחורה moderation in business. L., relying on the causative (Hif'il) conjugation of the word: 'makes himself and others wise'.

(42) In Ber. 63a there is an Aramaic version גבר תמן גבר תמן Hillel used both Hebrew and Aramaic, cf. supra I, 12, 13, 14.

(43) The impersonal use of 'they'. Though this usage is not uncommon in English, a passive construction might be preferable.

(44) The underlying idea is that divine retribution operates by way of 'measure for measure', cf. Ob. 15, As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee. Ps. VII, 16, 17, He hath digged a pit and hollowed it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violence shall come down upon his own pate. Ez Joseph lays stress on סוף 'even if these people die a natural death, a time will come when their skulls will float about on water.' However, the version in the Talmud (Suk. 53a) has not סוף.

(45) One puts on by over-indulgence in food.

(46) In the grave.

(47) Cf. Eccl. II, 22, 23. For what hath a man of all his labor for all his days are pains yea, even in the night his heart taketh no rest.

(48) Wives in their jealous rivalry for their husband's attentions will resort to seeking charms from witches whose occupation will prosper and spread (V.).

(49) A well-known feature of female slavery.

(50) They will combine to rob their master, or to rob others without their master's knowledge, but implicating him nevertheless. B. notes the sequence, (i) Flesh: the more one feels well-fed and 'pleased' with himself, the more one strives to amass (ii) wealth. The wealthier he is the more (iii) wives he will take, each of whom requires a large number of (iv) serving maids. The household grows to such proportions that he requires a large retinue of (v) slaves.

(51) prov. III, 1, 2. My son, forget not my teaching (Torah) but let thy heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and years of life, will they add to thee. Cf. *ibid.* IX, II, and Deut. XXX, 20.

(52) *ישיבה* some render 'academy', 'school(ing)' i.e., the more opportunities given to disciples for corporate study, the greater the ingenuity developed.

(53) Some versions *מרבית חכמה מרבית ישיבה* 'the greater the wisdom of the teacher, the better attended will be his school' (v. R. Jonah and B.).

(54) Cf. Prov. XII, 15, rendered, he that hearkeneth to counsel is wise.

(55) Cf. Isa. XXXII, 17, and the work of righteousness shall be peace. Some render *צדקה* 'charity' which makes for sympathy and understanding, and counteracts the bitterness often felt by the poor towards the rich, and which, by thus ensuring goodwill all round, preserves peace.

(56) Cf. Prov. XXII, I, A 'good name is rather to be chosen than great riches; Eccl. VII, 1, A good name is better than precious oil.

(57) It is peculiarly his own in the sense that, unlike any other possession, one man's good name can never become another's.

(58) Cf. Prov. VIII, 35. Wisdom (Torah) says: Whoso findeth me, findeth life, and obtaineth favor from the Lord; cf. Deut. XXX, 20.

(59) The chain of 'tradents' and 'recipients' interrupted at the end of I, 15, is continued here. It is suggested that when it came to Hillel, a 'progenitor' of a 'dynasty', the Mishnah continued with the descendants of Hillel till R. Judah ha-Nasi and his son R. Gamaliel (then adduced Hillel, by the way, on a topic dealt with by R. Gamaliel son of R. Judah, see Mishnah 4, n. 7), and then resumed here the chain of discipleship (see L.).

(60) *למדת* Lowe's MS., I ARN, Ch. XIV, R. Jonah. MV read *עשיית* 'thou hast accomplished'. V. Taylor, a.l.

(61) The idea that man, and especially an Israelite, is created for the purpose of giving himself to the study of the Word of God and obedience thereto, is deeply rooted in Biblical and Rabbinic literature, cf. Micah VI, 8: It hath been told thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord doth require of thee: only to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God. Cf. Deut. X, 12. L.: If you have acquired more than the average knowledge of the Torah, do not attribute it to your own superior abilities, for it is God who has endowed you with special talents in that direction.

(62) Lit. 'their praise'.

(63) ARN I, Ch. XXIX, adds, 'a vessel lined with pitch that retains the wine,' i.e., he had a very retentive memory. In Suk. 28a, he is reported to have claimed that he had never said anything that he had not heard from his own teachers. Frankel, *op. cit.* p. 78, argues that this statement cannot be upheld.

(64) I.e., to his mother was due most of the credit for his scholarship and she therefore had real cause to be proud of him. She is said to have taken him, in his cot, to the Beth-ha-Midrash so that from his infancy his ears might become attuned to the sound of the study of the Torah. ARN XIV has, instead, 'a threefold cord (that) is not quickly broken.' (Eccl. IV, 12.)

(65) I ARN (Ch. XIV) and II (Ch. XXIX): 'the most pious man in his generation.' V. Mishnah 5, n. 5, for the meaning of *Hasid*.

(66) V. Mishnah 5, n. 4. I ARN *ibid.* gives *ערוגה שבמדבר שמחסק מימיה* 'a garden-bed in the wilderness which retains its water,' (II ARN, XVI, to the same effect) as R. Johanan's description of R. Simeon b. Nethaneel.

(67) I.e., noted for an independent, keen and vigorous critical faculty, and thus differentiated from R. Eliezer b. Hyrcanus whose greatness consisted in assiduously gathering in and faithfully preserving all that he heard. I ARN adds 'whose waters swell and flow abroad as it is said (Prov. V, 16), lit thy springs be dispersed abroad, and courses of water in the streets.'

(68) Title for a scholar less than that of 'Rabbi' (v. Jast.).

(69) R. Johanan's. II ARM *ibid.* 'on the authority of R. Akiba who used to say it in his (R. Johanan's) name.' Rashi, 'in the name of R. Gamaliel in the name of R. Johanan b. Zakkai.'

(70) There was a difference of opinion as to whether the scholastic quality known as **סיני** ('Sinai', an erudite scholar) which was that of R. Eliezer, or the one termed **עוקר הרים** ('an uprooter of mountains', a dialectician), which distinguished R. Eleazar, is to be preferred. V. Ber. 64a, where the conclusion is that the former is the better, as even the scholar who is ingenious in arguing the merits of various opinions, is himself dependent on the material made available by the scholar who accumulates the teaching of his predecessors and contemporaries. The 'First Tanna' (**תנא קמא**) of this Mishnah understood Rabban Johanan to have preferred the 'Sinai', whilst Abba Saul ascribed to Rabban Johanan a predilection for the 'uprooter of mountains'. Some versions omit 'Rabbi' given here with the names of Eliezer, etc. as at that time they were still disciples and not yet independent scholars.

(71) Leave your immediate environment, and go among men of all classes (v. L.).

(72) Generosity. Cf. Prov. XXII, 9, He that hath a bountiful (lit. 'good') eye shall be blessed, for he giveth of his bread to the poor. Maim. Contentment with what one has.

(73) One should seek and cultivate a good friend. R. Jonah: One should oneself be a good friend.

(74) One should seek and cultivate a good neighbor. As a good friend is not necessarily with you very often, it is even more important to have someone who is constantly near at hand. R. Jonah: One should oneself be a good neighbor.

(75) Or, by time, v. Prov. XXVII, 1, What the day may bring forth.

(76) The heart being the generator of all physical, mental and emotional processes (after Maim.). R. Jonah: A good heart means patience and goodwill. Perhaps, however, **לב טוב** is to be taken in the only sense in which it is used in the Bible, viz. 'a joyous heart', which puts one in a good humor with, and ensures the right kind of disposition towards everybody and all things. ARN *ibid.* appears to have understood it so. 'A good heart towards Heaven, (a good heart towards the commandments,) a good heart: towards all creatures' (cf. Elijah Wilna and L.).

(77) He had to ask this question instead of inferring the answer to it from the answers to the previous question, because the negative of a good quality is not always an evil quality which should be shunned.

(78) A grudging nature; cf. Prov. XXIII, 6, Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye.

(79) Apart from the dishonesty of such conduct, he does not think that he is not likely to be trusted again

with a loan; in this he is the antithesis of the man who looks ahead to see the consequences of his conduct.

(80) For **מקום** (lit., 'Place') as an appellation for God see Marmorstein, *Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God*, pp. 14, 92, 142. It was used in the earliest Rabbinic sources.

(81) Ps. XXXVII, 21. M. and others understand 'the righteous', in this connection, in the Midrashic sense, viz. 'the Righteous One', i.e., God (v. Marmorstein, *op. cit.*, p. 95). If a borrower fails to repay, God will repay the kindly lender. Thus the borrower (even if he is released, say by bankruptcy, from the obligation of repaying to man [so R. Jonah]) remains a debtor to God, and continued neglect to repay renders him a **רשע**. For the idea that help given to the needy is a loan to God, v. Prov. XIX, 17. He that is gracious unto the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; his good deed will He repay unto him. If R. Simeon himself really understood **צדיק** in this case as referring to God, we have an earlier authority for the idea than the one referred to by Marmorstein *ibid.* (viz., Bar-Kappara).

(82) On the principle of Love thy neighbor as thyself (Lev. XIX, 18).

(83) Cf. Eccl. VII, 9, Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry.

(84) I ARN, Ch. XV; II Ch. XXIX, Koh. Rab. Ch. IX, Shab. 153a report that when R. Eliezer's disciples asked him: Does any man know what day he is to die? he replied: All the more reason for him to repent every day of his life in case he should die on the morrow. ARN, Maim., R. Jonah take the foregoing to constitute the 'three things' referred to in the heading of this Mishnah, and what follows ('Warm thyself', etc.) as an addition. This scheme is adopted in this translation. However, Rashi, MV, B., L. take 'let the honor' and 'be not easily provoked' as one dictum, 'repent, etc. as the second, and 'warm thyself' as the third.

(85) The Torah which is called **אור** (i. e. light or flame) v. Prov. VI, 23, The teaching (Torah) is light. Elijah Wilna cites Isa. II, 5, O house of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light (**אור** which also flame) of the Lord.

(86) The commentators regard this as a warning against behaving towards the Sages in a manner incompatible with the dignity which should be theirs as exponents of the Torah.

(87) Their fire, the fire of the Torah, being a divine fire (cf. Deut. XXXIII, 2, At his right hand was a fiery law), is an ever potent one, even when the Sages are, as it were, not aflame but only resembling glowing coals.

(88) The bite, even a slight one, of a fox was thought particularly hurtful because its teeth were said to be crooked.

(89) The sting alone of a scorpion is poisonous.



(90) The very hiss of a serpent was believed to be deadly. Some render 'the murmuring (of incantations) over them (i.e. the scholars or their 'bites' and 'stings') is (as ineffective) as the murmuring (of incantations) over a fiery serpent.' cf. Ps. LVIII, 6 (of an asp) which hearkeneth not to the voice of charmers (מַלְחָשִׁים).

(91) Their mere words, even if they seem unimportant, should be heeded as they, too, are aglow with the Divine fire of the Torah. Or, the mere words of the Sages even when not intended to be 'burning' are like coals of fire, which, if approached or dealt with, without due care, will burn one. For the action of the fire of God upon those who take up the wrong attitude towards Him, i.e. upon the wicked, v. Mal. III, 19, 20. For, behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace; and all the proud, and all that work wickedness, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall set them ablaze, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in its wings. Herford sees in these words of R. Eliezer a piece of self-revelation expressive of the deep suffering he endured as a result of the severe ban of excommunication which the Rabbis pronounced against him, v. B.M. 59b.

(92) For a full treatment of the subject, v. Schechter, *Some aspects of Rabbinic Theology*, p. 24.

(93) II ARN, Ch. XXX, 'out of this world and out of the world to come'. A man who hates everybody will draw upon himself the hatred of all others and this is likely to bring him to a premature and unnatural end (v. B.). Maim.: Greed for wealth (= the evil eye), a surfeit of lustfulness (= the evil inclination) and a bad disposition (= hatred of one's fellows), which is melancholia, have the effect of making one loathe the world and of inducing him to take up the life of a recluse not out of ascetic piety, but because he is insatiably envious of, and grudging towards, his fellow-men. This would no doubt also have deleterious physical effects, and cause his premature death.

(94) Cf. Mishnah 10, n. 6. R. Jonah understands, 'when the other person's property is in your charge, deal with it in accordance with the owner's wish.'

(95) Put yourself in a proper frame of mind so that you approach the Torah with due reverence and Zest (v. MV and Ez Joseph). ARN, B., in view of the following clause, lay stress on 'thyself'.

(96) ARN cites the case of the sons of Moses who did not follow in their father's footsteps. MV says this clause is not an authentic part of R. Jose's dictum and should be omitted.

(97) Even the most elementary bodily functions. II ARN, Ch. XXX, relates the anecdote of Hillel who looked upon the taking of a bath as a Mizwah

(religious duty), inasmuch as by that one cleansed the body which God made in his own image.

(98) On 'Heaven', cf. supra I, 3, n. 6.

(99) The liturgical unit comprising the passages Deut. VI, 4—9, XI, 13—21, Num. XV, 37—41, considered by the Rabbis to contain the principles of the Decalogue, and ordained for recital twice daily, 'when thou liest down, and when thou risest up' (Deut. VI, 7). The admonition here is that it should be 'read' or 'recited' (the verb קרא may mean either) at the proper hours (Rashi, V., B.).

(100) Prayer תפלה par excellence is the 'Amidah, (P.B. p. 44, etc.) to be recited thrice daily at defined times.

(101) L.: Since these prayers are regularly repeated, there is the danger of their recital deteriorating into one by rote, hence 'be careful'.

(102) רהמים omitted in Lowe's MS., R. Jonah, and MV.

(103) V. Mishnah 9, n. 6.

(104) Joel II, 13. Possibly the Scriptural quotation was introduced later. R. Jonah quotes Jonah IV, 2, which is very similar to Joel II, 13.

(105) So R. Tam (quoted in MV.), R. Jonah and M. The latter adds 'and thus set yourself a low standard of conduct.' MV: Do not do anything which you understand to be wrong, even if others do not realize it. Or (preferred by MV), do not be wicked by imagining and behaving as if you were the only person in the world, and therefore refusing to associate in friendship with your fellow-men.

(106) Much depends on the division of this Mishnah into the three dicta. MV and R. Jonah: 1) Be eager that thou mayest know what. 2) Know before whom 3) Who is thine Employer Rashi's division is not quite clear. Though we would expect him to agree with V., it nevertheless seems that he divided 1) Be eager 2) Know what answer 3) Know before whom and who is thine Employer B.'s arrangement was: 1) Be eager 2) Know what answer and before whom thou toilest, 3) Who is thine Employer. M.'s division (though not interpretation) seems to have been the same as B.'s, but may, on the other hand, have agreed with the one given here as the probable one of Rashi.

(107) שקר the passive instead of the active mood of the verb used in the Bible suggests 'be actuated by an eagerness' (v. L.).

(108) It may be that R. Eleazar's advocacy of eagerness and enthusiasm in the study of Torah, was due to the lesson he had learnt from his own experience, when after the death of his master (R. Johanan b. Zakkai) he refused to join his fellow-disciples and went to reside in Emmaus (?) because it was a pleasant resort, and in the course of a short time he forgot his learning. V. infra IV, 14, where R. Nehorai is thought to be another name for R. Eleazar b. 'Arak.

(109) MV., R. Jonah: in order that thou mayest know. Maim.: Get to know, study, other religious systems.

(110) A term applied to heretics in general, v. Sanh. (Sonc. ed.) p. 244, n. 10.

(111) M.: 'but know' Whilst you are studying the creeds of others, know, keep in mind, that He whom you are serving knows your innermost thoughts and so take care to prevent false doctrines from influencing you.

(112) I.e., God, v. Marmorstein, op. cit., p. 79. Lowe's MS. stops here. The clause which follows in our Version may also be due to the next Mishnah. v. Bacher, *Agada der Tannaiten*, I, p. 77.

(113) A younger (?) contemporary of the above-mentioned disciples of Rabban Johanan b. Zakkai.

(114) I.e., man's earthly life, cf. Job VIII, 9, For we are but of yesterday because our days upon earth are a shadow.

(115) MV, R. Jonah, B.: 'Study of the Torah'. L.: 'man's duties towards God and man.'

(116) Therefore do not waste any time away from your task. cf. Job XI, 8, 9 (of the study of the ways and purposes of God). It is as high as heaven deeper than the nether-world, the measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

(117) Human beings (v. M. and R. Jonah and others). The faculties which man has at his service (L.).

(118) Naturally so; some more and some less, but all are so inclined; therefore you should deliberately overcome that sluggishness.

(119) Prov. VIII, 10, 11, Receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than rubies, and all things desirable are not to be compared with her ('Instruction', 'Knowledge', 'Wisdom' are taken to mean the Torah). 'Reward' here would, accordingly, mean that the very knowledge of the Torah is the reward acquired by the diligent work put into the study thereof.

(120) The Master of the World, i.e., God; v. Marmorstein, op. cit., p. 77.

(121) In that Scripture repeatedly urges the study of the Word of God and the fulfillment of His precepts, and, even if you should renounce the desire for the reward, you must carry out your task because your Master insists that you should.

(122) MV has an interesting alternative interpretation, viz., 'You were not made a free man (i.e. delivered from Egyptian bondage) so that you might remain exempt from Torah and Precepts.' The divine purpose of the Redemption was that Israel might accept God's Law. Ex. XIX, 4, 5, Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians Now therefore, if ye

will hearken unto My voice indeed, and keep my covenant. Deut. IV, 37 — 40, and brought thee out of Egypt and thou shalt keep His statutes and his commandments. *ibid.* VI, 23, 24, And He brought us forth from thence and he commanded us to do all these statutes.

(123) V. Mishnah 6, n. 1.

(124) L. says the פְּעֻלָּה means labor accomplished, work perfected. The passage would thus mean: You can trust God to reward you if you have carried out His commandments to the highest perfection of which you are capable.

(125) Lit., 'for the future (that is) to come,' or 'for (the time) that is due to come,' i.e., the Hereafter or the Messianic future.

### Avoth Chapter 3

**MISHNAH 1. AKABIAH B. MAHALALEEL<sup>1</sup> SAID: APPLY THY MIND<sup>2</sup> TO THREE<sup>3</sup> THINGS AND THOU WILT NOT COME INTO THE POWER OF SIN: KNOW WHENCE THOU CAMEST, AND WHITHER THOU ART GOING, AND BEFORE WHOM THOU ART DESTINED TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT AND RECKONING. WHENCE CAMEST THOU? — FROM A FETID DROP. WHITHER ART THOU GOING? — TO A PLACE OF DUST,<sup>4</sup> OF WORM AND OF MAGGOT.<sup>5</sup> BEFORE WHOM ART THOU DESTINED TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT AND RECKONING?<sup>6</sup> — BEFORE THE KING OF THE KINGS OF KINGS,<sup>7</sup> THE HOLY ONE,<sup>8</sup> BLESSED BE HE.<sup>9</sup>**

**MISHNAH 2. R. HANINA, THE VICE-HIGH PRIEST,<sup>10</sup> SAID: PRAY FOR THE WELFARE OF THE GOVERNMENT, FOR WERE IT NOT FOR THE FEAR THEREOF, ONE MAN WOULD SWALLOW UP ALIVE HIS FELLOW-MAN.<sup>11</sup> R. HANANIAH B. TERADION<sup>12</sup> SAID: [WHEN] TWO SIT TOGETHER AND THERE ARE NO WORDS OF TORAH [SPOKEN] BETWEEN THEM, LO, THIS [CONSTITUTES] A SESSION OF SCORNERS, AS IT IS SAID: NOR SAT HE IN THE SEAT OF THE SCORNFUL;<sup>13</sup> BUT [WHEN] TWO SIT TOGETHER AND THERE ARE WORDS OF TORAH [SPOKEN] BETWEEN THEM, THE SHECHINAH<sup>14</sup> ABIDES AMONG THEM, AS IT IS SAID: THEN THEY THAT FEARED THE LORD SPOKE ONE WITH ANOTHER;<sup>15</sup> AND**

# OVOS

THE LORD HEARKENED AND HEARD, AND A BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE WAS WRITTEN BEFORE HIM, FOR THEM THAT FEARED THE LORD AND THAT THOUGHT UPON HIS NAME<sup>16</sup>. — I HAVE NO [SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE PRESENCE OF THE SHECHINAH] EXCEPT [AMONG] TWO, WHENCE [IS THERE PROOF THAT] EVEN [WHEN THERE IS ONLY] ONE [PERSON]. THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, APPOINTS UNTO HIM A REWARD? — SINCE IT IS SAID: THOUGH HE SIT ALONE AND [MEDITATE] IN STILLNESS, YET HE TAKETH [A REWARD] UNTO HIMSELF.<sup>17</sup>

*MISHNAH* 3. R. SIMEON<sup>18</sup> SAID: IF THREE HAVE EATEN AT ONE TABLE<sup>19</sup> AND HAVE NOT SPOKEN THEREAT WORDS OF TORAH, [IT IS] AS IF THEY HAD EATEN SACRIFICES [OFFERED] TO THE DEAD,<sup>20</sup> FOR [OF SUCH PERSONS] IT IS SAID, FOR ALL TABLES ARE FULL OF FILTHY VOMIT, [THEY ARE] WITHOUT THE ALL-PRESENT.<sup>21</sup> BUT, IF THREE HAVE EATEN AT ONE TABLE, AND HAVE SPOKEN THEREAT WORDS OF TORAH, [IT IS] AS IF THEY HAD EATEN AT THE TABLE OF THE ALL-PRESENT, BLESSED BE HE, AS IT IS SAID, THIS IS THE TABLE BEFORE THE LORD.<sup>22</sup>

*MISHNAH* 4. R. HANINA B. HAKINAI<sup>23</sup> SAID: HE WHO KEEPS AWAKE AT NIGHT, AND HE WHO WALKS ON THE WAY ALONE<sup>24</sup> AND MAKES ROOM<sup>25</sup> IN HIS HEART FOR THAT WHICH IS FUTILE,<sup>26</sup> LO, THIS [MAN] INCURS GUILT [EXPIABLE] BY HIS LIFE.<sup>27</sup>

*MISHNAH* 5. R. NEHUNIA<sup>28</sup> B. HAKKANAH<sup>29</sup> SAID: WHOEVER TAKES UPON HIMSELF THE YOKE OF THE TORAH,<sup>30</sup> THEY REMOVE FROM HIM THE YOKE OF GOVERNMENT<sup>31</sup> AND THE YOKE OF WORLDLY CONCERNS,<sup>32</sup> AND WHOEVER BREAKS OFF FROM HIMSELF<sup>33</sup> THE YOKE OF THE TORAH, THEY PLACE UPON HIM THE YOKE OF GOVERNMENT AND THE YOKE OF WORLDLY CONCERNS.

*MISHNAH* 6. R. HALAFTA<sup>34</sup> [A MAN] OF KEFAR HANANIA<sup>35</sup> SAID: [WHEN THERE ARE] TEN SITTING TOGETHER AND OCCUPYING THEMSELVES WITH TORAH, THE SHECHINAH ABIDES AMONG THEM, AS IT IS SAID: GOD STANDETH IN THE CONGREGATION OF GOD.<sup>36</sup> AND WHENCE [DO WE INFER THAT THE SAME APPLIES] EVEN [WHEN THERE ARE] FIVE? [FROM] THAT WHICH IS SAID: AND HE HATH FOUNDED HIS BAND UPON THE EARTH.<sup>37</sup> AND WHENCE [DO WE INFER THAT THE SAME APPLIES] EVEN [WHEN THERE ARE THREE?] [FROM] THAT WHICH IS SAID: IN THE MIDST OF THE JUDGES HE JUDGETH.<sup>38</sup> AND WHENCE [DO WE INFER THAT THE SAME APPLIES] EVEN [WHERE THERE ARE] TWO? [FROM] THAT WHICH IS SAID: THEN THEY THAT FEAR THE LORD SPOKE ONE WITH ANOTHER, AND THE LORD HEARKENED, AND HEARD, etc.<sup>39</sup> AND WHENCE [DO WE INFER THAT THE SAME APPLIES] EVEN [WHEN THERE IS] ONE? [FROM] THAT WHICH IS SAID: IN EVERY PLACE WHERE I CAUSE MY NAME TO BE MENTIONED I WILL COME UNTO THEE AND BLESS THEE.<sup>40</sup>

*MISHNAH* 7. R. ELEAZAR<sup>41</sup> (A MAN) OF BERTOTHA<sup>42</sup> SAID: GIVE UNTO HIM OF THAT WHICH IS HIS, FOR THOU AND WHAT THOU HAST ARE HIS; EVEN SO [WE FIND IT EXPRESSED] IN [THE CASE OF] DAVID, [WHEN] HE SAID: FOR ALL THINGS COME OF THEE, AND OF THINE OWN HAVE WE GIVEN THEE.<sup>43</sup> R. SIMEON<sup>44</sup> SAID: WHEN ONE, WALKING ON THE ROAD, REHEARSES<sup>45</sup> [WHAT HE HAS LEARNT], AND BREAKS OFF<sup>46</sup> FROM HIS REHEARSING, AND SAYS, 'HOW FINE IS THIS TREE!' [OR] 'HOW FINE IS THIS NEWLY PLOWED FIELD!' SCRIPTURE<sup>47</sup> ACCOUNTS IT TO HIM AS IF<sup>48</sup> HE HAD INCURRED GUILT [EXPIABLE] BY HIS LIFE.<sup>49</sup>

*MISHNAH* 8. R. DOSTAI<sup>50</sup> B. R. JANNAI<sup>51</sup> SAID IN THE NAME OF<sup>52</sup> R. MEIR: WHOEVER FORGETS ONE [SINGLE] WORD<sup>53</sup> OF HIS

STUDY, SCRIPTURE ACCOUNTS IT UNTO HIM AS IF HE HAD INCURRED GUILT [EXPIABLE] BY HIS LIFE, AS IT IS SAID, ONLY TAKE HEED TO THY SELF AND KEEP THY SOUL DILIGENTLY, LEST THOU FORGET THE THINGS WHICH THINE EYES SAW<sup>54</sup>. ONE COULD [HAVE INFERRED THAT THIS IS THE CASE] EVEN WHEN HIS STUDY PROVED [TOO] HARD FOR HIM; [THERE IS, THEREFORE] SOMETHING [FURTHER] TAUGHT [IN SCRIPTURE], SAYING: AND LEST THEY DEPART FROM THY HEART ALL THE DAYS OF THY LIFE.<sup>55</sup> THUS, HE DOES NOT INCUR GUILT EXPIABLE BY HIS LIFE UNLESS HE DELIBERATELY<sup>56</sup> SUFFERS THEM TO DEPART<sup>57</sup> FROM HIS HEART.

*MISHNAH 9.* R. HANINA B. DOSA<sup>58</sup> SAID: ANYONE WHOSE FEAR OF SIN<sup>59</sup> PRECEDES<sup>60</sup> HIS WISDOM, HIS WISDOM IS ENDURING,<sup>61</sup> BUT ANYONE WHOSE WISDOM PRECEDES HIS FEAR OF SIN, HIS WISDOM IS NOT ENDURING.<sup>62</sup> HE [ALSO] USED TO SAY: ANYONE WHOSE DEEDS EXCEED HIS WISDOM, HIS WISDOM IS ENDURING, BUT ANYONE WHOSE WISDOM EXCEEDS HIS DEEDS, HIS WISDOM IS NOT ENDURING.<sup>63</sup>

*MISHNAH 10.* HE [ALSO] USED TO SAY: ANYONE FROM WHOM THE SPIRIT OF [HIS FELLOW-] CREATURES DERIVES SATISFACTION, FROM HIM THE SPIRIT OF THE ALL-PRESENT [TOO] DERIVES SATISFACTION.<sup>64</sup> BUT ANYONE FROM WHOM THE SPIRIT OF [HIS FELLOW-] CREATURES DERIVES NO SATISFACTION, FROM HIM THE SPIRIT OF THE ALL-PRESENT [TOO] DERIVES NO SATISFACTION. R. DOSA B. HARKINAS<sup>65</sup> SAID: MORNING SLEEP,<sup>66</sup> MIDDAY WINE,<sup>67</sup> CHILDREN'S TALK<sup>68</sup> AND SITTING IN THE ASSEMBLIES OF THE IGNORANT<sup>69</sup> PUT A MAN OUT OF THE WORLD.<sup>70</sup>

*MISHNAH 11.* R. ELEAZAR OF MODIN<sup>71</sup> SAID: ONE WHO PROFANES THINGS SACRED,<sup>72</sup> AND ONE WHO SLIGHTS THE FESTIVALS, AND ONE WHO CAUSES HIS FELLOW-MAN'S

FACE TO BLANCH<sup>73</sup> IN PUBLIC, AND ONE WHO NULLIFIES THE COVENANT OF OUR FATHER ABRAHAM,<sup>74</sup> PEACE BE UPON HIM,<sup>75</sup> AND HE WHO EXHIBITS IMPUDENCE TOWARDS THE TORAH,<sup>76</sup> EVEN THOUGH HE HAS TO HIS CREDIT<sup>77</sup> [KNOWLEDGE OF THE] TORAH<sup>78</sup> AND GOOD DEEDS, HE HAS NOT A SHARE IN THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME.<sup>79</sup>

*MISHNAH 12.* R. ISHMAEL SAID: BE QUICK<sup>80</sup> [TO RENDER SERVICE] TO A SUPERIOR<sup>81</sup> AND EASY [OF APPROACH] TO A SUPPLIANT [FOR THY SERVICES],<sup>82</sup> AND RECEIVE ALL MEN WITH CHEERFULLNESS.<sup>83</sup>

*MISHNAH 13.* R. AKIBA SAID: JESTING AND LIGHT-HEADEDNESS<sup>84</sup> LEAD A MAN ON<sup>85</sup> TO LEWDNESS;<sup>86</sup> TRADITION<sup>87</sup> IS A FENCE TO THE TORAH;<sup>88</sup> TITHES [FORM] A FENCE TO WEALTH,<sup>89</sup> VOWS A FENCE TO SELF-RESTRAINT;<sup>90</sup> A FENCE TO WISDOM IS SILENCE.<sup>91</sup>

*MISHNAH 14.* HE [ALSO] USED TO SAY: BELOVED IS MAN<sup>92</sup> IN THAT HE WAS CREATED IN THE IMAGE [OF GOD]. [IT IS A MARK OF] SUPERABUNDANT LOVE [THAT] IT WAS MADE KNOWN TO HIM THAT HE HAD BEEN CREATED IN THE IMAGE [OF GOD], AS IT IS SAID: FOR IN THE IMAGE OF GOD MADE HE MAN.<sup>93</sup> BELOVED ARE ISRAEL IN THAT THEY WERE CALLED CHILDREN OF THE ALL-PRESENT. [IT WAS A MARK OF] SUPERABUNDANT LOVE [THAT] IT WAS MADE KNOWN TO THEM THAT THEY WERE CALLED CHILDREN OF THE ALL-PRESENT, AS IT IS SAID: YE ARE CHILDREN OF THE LORD YOUR GOD.<sup>94</sup> BELOVED ARE ISRAEL IN THAT A DESIRABLE INSTRUMENT<sup>95</sup> WAS GIVEN TO THEM. [IT WAS A MARK OF] SUPERABUNDANT LOVE [THAT] IT WAS MADE KNOWN TO THEM THAT THE DESIRABLE INSTRUMENT, WHEREWITH THE WORLD HAD BEEN CREATED,<sup>96</sup> WAS GIVEN TO THEM, AS IT IS SAID: FOR I GIVE



YOU GOOD DOCTRINE FORSAKE NOT MY TEACHING.<sup>97</sup>

*MISHNAH* 15.<sup>98</sup> EVERYTHING IS FORESEEN<sup>99</sup> BUT THE RIGHT [OF CHOICE]<sup>100</sup> IS GRANTED, AND THE WORLD IS JUDGED WITH GOODNESS,<sup>101</sup> AND EVERYTHING IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PREPONDERANCE OF [MAN'S] DEED[S].<sup>102</sup>

*MISHNAH* 16. HE<sup>103</sup> [ALSO] USED TO SAY: EVERYTHING<sup>104</sup> IS GIVEN AGAINST A PLEDGE,<sup>105</sup> AND A NET IS SPREAD OUT OVER ALL THE LIVING;<sup>106</sup> THE STORE<sup>107</sup> IS OPEN AND THE STOREKEEPER<sup>108</sup> ALLOWS CREDIT, BUT THE LEDGER<sup>109</sup> IS OPEN AND THE HAND WRITES,<sup>110</sup> AND WHOEVER WISHES TO BORROW MAY COME AND BORROW; BUT THE COLLECTORS<sup>111</sup> GO ROUND REGULARLY EVERY DAY AND EXACT DUES FROM MAN, EITHER WITH HIS CONSENT OR WITHOUT HIS CONSENT,<sup>111</sup> AND THEY HAVE THAT ON WHICH THEY [CAN] RELY [IN THEIR CLAIMS], SEEING THAT THE JUDGMENT IS A RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT,<sup>112</sup> AND EVERYTHING IS PREPARED FOR THE BANQUET.<sup>113</sup>

*MISHNAH* 17. R. ELEAZAR B. AZARIAH<sup>114</sup> SAID: WHERE THERE IS NO TORAH<sup>115</sup> THERE IS NO GOOD BREEDING;<sup>116</sup> WHERE THERE IS NO GOOD BREEDING THERE IS NO TORAH.<sup>117</sup> WHERE THERE IS NO WISDOM THERE IS NO FEAR [OF GOD]; WHERE THERE IS NO FEAR [OF GOD] THERE IS NO WISDOM.<sup>118</sup> WHERE THERE IS NO UNDERSTANDING<sup>119</sup> THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE;<sup>120</sup> WHERE THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE THERE IS NO UNDERSTANDING. WHERE THERE IS NO MEAL<sup>121</sup> THERE IS NO TORAH;<sup>122</sup> WHERE THERE IS NO TORAH THERE IS NO MEAL.<sup>123</sup> HE USED TO SAY: ONE WHOSE WISDOM EXCEEDS HIS DEEDS<sup>124</sup> UNTO WHAT IS HE [TO BE] COMPARED? UNTO A TREE THE BRANCHES WHEREOF ARE MANY AND THE ROOTS FEW, SO THAT WHEN THE WIND COMES, IT UPROOTS IT AND OVERTURNS IT

UPON ITS FACE, AS IT IS SAID, FOR HE SHALL BE LIKE A TAMARISK IN THE DESERT, AND SHALL NOT SEE WHEN GOOD COMETH; BUT SHALL INHABIT THE PARCHED PLACES IN THE WILDERNESS, A SALT LAND AND NOT INHABITED.<sup>125</sup> BUT ONE WHOSE DEEDS EXCEED HIS WISDOM, UNTO WHAT IS HE [TO BE] COMPARED? UNTO A TREE THE BRANCHES WHEREOF ARE FEW AND THE ROOTS MANY, SO THAT EVEN IF ALL THE WINDS IN THE WORLD COME AND BLOW UPON IT, THEY MOVE IT NOT OUT OF ITS PLACE, AS IT IS SAID, FOR HE SHALL BE AS A TREE PLANTED BY THE WATERS AND THAT SPREADETH OUT ITS ROOTS BY THE RIVER, AND SHALL NOT SEE WHEN HEAT COMETH, BUT ITS FOLIAGE SHALL BE LUXURIANT, AND SHALL NOT BE ANXIOUS IN THE YEAR OF DROUGHT, NEITHER SHALL CEASE FROM YIELDING FRUIT.<sup>125</sup>

*MISHNAH* 18. R. ELIEZER HISMA<sup>126</sup> SAID: KINNIM [I. E. 'NESTS']<sup>127</sup> AND PITHEHE NIDDAH [I.E. 'THE STARTING TIMES OF A MENSTRUOUS WOMAN']<sup>128</sup> ARE ESSENTIAL ORDINANCES;<sup>129</sup> [THE STUDY OF THE] 'REVOLUTIONS' [OF THE HEAVENLY BODIES]<sup>130</sup> AND ARITHMETIC<sup>131</sup> ARE AFTER COURSES<sup>132</sup> OF WISDOM.

(1) Frankel, op. cit. pp. 57-8: he lived in Temple times and was a contemporary of Hillel. On Shammai's death he was invited to become Ab-Beth-din on condition that he should first withdraw opinions adhered to by him against his colleagues, but he refused. ('Eduy. V, 6.)

(2) V. supra II. 1.

(3) I and II ARN p. 69: four things, viz. (i) and (ii) as here, (iii) what is to become of thee? (iv) who is thy judge? This form of the admonition is ascribed in D.E.R. Ch. III to Simeon b. 'Azzai. V. Schechter's notes to ARN.

(4) Cf. Gen. III, 19, for dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return.

(5) Cf. Job XXV, 6, man that is a worm and the son of man, that is a maggot!

(6) V. Eccl. XI, 9, But know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee unto judgment.

(7) An early appellation of God which has parallels in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. V. Marmorstein, op. cit. p. 90.

(8) A synonym for God introduced in the third century. Marmorstein, *op. cit.*, p. 97 and pp. 216-17: at that period saint-worship spread in Christianity, and Judaism reacted by calling God הקדוש (and variations), implying that He is the only Holy Being. Here, therefore, in an early Tannaitic dictum, הקדוש must be by a later hand. It is not in Lowe's MS. From *Tanhuma Gen.* (ed. Buber, p. 120) Marmorstein concludes that the original reading was המקום ברוך הוא *v. op. cit.*, p. 109, n. 13.

(9) Marmorstein, *op. cit.*, p. 90, points out that ברוך הוא is an early adjunct to various names of God, and refers to Job. XXII, 27, and the Book of Enoch. Consideration of the first point will induce humility; of the second, will prevent too strong a craving for worldly pleasures; of the third, will result in a fuller appreciation of the majesty and power of God. (After M., R. Jonah and B.)

(10) סגן הכהנים *cf.* II Kings XXIII, 4, כהני המשנה, the priests of the second rank, which Targum renders סגני הכניא The 'Segan' was appointed to take the place of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement in the event of some occurrence preventing the latter from performing the offices of the Day, since those offices were strictly obligatory and might be performed by none except a properly constituted High Priest, *v. Sanh.* (Sonc. ed.) p. 97 n. 1.

(11) V. Jer. XXIX, 7, And seek ye the welfare of the city whither I have carried you away captive, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. For the expression 'swallow alive', *cf.* Prov. I, 12 (the wicked say.) Let us swallow them (i.e. the innocent) up alive.

(12) Father of Beruriah, the wife of R. Meir.

(13) Ps. I, 1. לצים the plural, according to a Rabbinic exegetical rule, denotes a minimum of two. The following verse, but his delight is in the Law of the Lord shows, by contrast, that a session of the scornful means one at which there is no conversation on Torah.

(14) שכינה the Divine Immanence, from the root שכן 'to dwell'. It has been thought that GR.\*\* (*sc.* GR.\*\*\*) in N.T. is a transliteration of שכינה This identification is however by no means established; *v.* Abelson, *The Immanence of God in Rabbinic Literature*, p. 80. He rejects the identification except in one case (John I, 14), where he admits only a 'seeming probability'. Marmorstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-4, says, 'It is by no means impossible that שכינה stands in the Aramaic versions for מקום both of which point to the dwelling-place of God.' He also refers to the statement of Landau, *Synonyma fur Gott*, to the effect that שכינה is the latest of God's names to be used before the period of the redaction of the Mishnah.

(15) Obviously two persons conversing.

(16) Mal. III, 16.

(17) Lam. III, 28. The rendering given here is one that was probably in the mind of the Sage who used the quotation here. Lowe's MS. has a different version of this section of the Mishnah, viz., 'as for one who sits and studies, Scripture accounts it unto him as if he fulfilled the whole Torah, as it is said, then one sitteth alone (and meditateth) in stillness, it is as he hath taken (the yoke of the Torah) upon himself.' R. Jonah cites a similar version. 'I have no, etc.' is omitted according to MV, p. 506, in the text of Ephraim of Regensburg and other 'careful texts', but M. and R. Jonah had it.

(18) R. Simeon b. Yohai, a disciple of R. Akiba. In II ARN, Ch. XXXIV, the first part of the Mishnah is attributed to R. Eleazar son of Zadok.

(19) Three males over the age of thirteen constitute a quorum for a corporate form of the Opening of Grace after Meals. This rule possibly has its origin in the custom reflected here, as the recital of Grace after meals was in certain circumstances considered as covering also the desirable custom of speaking words of Torah at the table.

(20) I.e., idols, *v.* Ps. CVI, 28, They joined themselves also to Ba'al-Pe'or, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. *Cf.* Isa. VIII, 19.

(21) Isa. XXVIII, 8. The second half is translated here in accordance with the Aggadic rendering of בלי מקום (in the Versions, and no place [is clean]), viz., to the effect that God is not present at such a table; and inasmuch as God comes wherever His name is mentioned or Torah studied (*v.* Mishnah 6), God's absence can only be due to the absence of words of Torah. Elijah Wilna draws attention to the verse following, Whom shall one teach knowledge, etc. as indicating that what was lacking at those tables was Torah.

(22) Ezek. XLI, 22, where it refers to the Altar. By designating the Altar as 'table', the text is taken to convey that there are times when the table of man can become as hallowed even as the altar — when it is consecrated by words of Torah spoken thereat.

(23) A disciple of R. Akiba.

(24) MV., B., L.: 'alone' is also to be understood with 'he who keeps awake at night'.

(25) For this meaning of the Pi'el of פנה . *cf.* Gen. XXIV, 31.

(26) Most commentators take this to qualify the two preceding clauses, as there is nothing wrong with keeping awake at night (according to some, even alone) as long as one is occupied with worthy thoughts, e.g., with prayer (*cf.* Ps. CXIX, 62, at midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee), or with Torah (*cf.* Josh. I, 8, This book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night. Ps. LXIII, 7, When I remember Thee on my couch, and meditate on Thee in the night-watches). Nor is there moral danger in walking alone when similarly occupied, *cf.* Deut. VI,

7, and thou shalt talk of them (i.e., the words commanded by God) when thou walkest by the way. Some versions 'and he who makes room in his heart' thus making three categories of men who endanger their own lives.

(27) Or 'incurs guilty responsibility for his life'.

(28) Probably a form of חוניה (Onias), or of יוהנן (Johanen). He was a contemporary of R. Johanan b. Zakkai and a teacher of R. Ishmael.

(29) Some read ha-Kanah. The meaning and derivation of the name is obscure קנה. Kanah occurs in Josh. XVI, 8, XVII, 8, as the name of a brook or wadi, and *ibid.* XIX, 28, as the name of a place. Geiger, relying on a reading קנה. conjectures 'the zealot', v. Bacher *Agada d. Tannaitei* I, p. 58. n. 1.

(30) V. Schechter, *Some Aspects, Chapters V-VII and XIV*. Buchler, *Sin and Atonement*, pp. 88ff., says the 'yoke of the Torah' is not exactly synonymous with the 'yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven,' and refers particularly to the duty of the study of Torah.

(31) *Jast. s.v. מלכות* 'the yoke of secular government, i.e. the burden of office.' Buchler, *op. cit.*, 89-91; the yoke of the Imperial Government.

(32) The strain imposed by the struggle for existence and striving for wealth and by various forms of temptation; cf. Buchler, *op. cit.*, pp. 89 and 91, n. 3, 'worldly occupation'. In the 13th century this and similar passages were assumed to mean that poor scholars were supported by the communities.

(33) V. Schechter, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221.

(34) A contemporary of R. Akiba. P.B. versions add 'b. Dosa'.

(35) The present Kefr Anan, a village in Galilee.

(36) Ps. LXXXII, I. A 'congregation' consists of a minimum of ten, as the term 'Edah is used in Num. XIV, 27, for ten men, v. Sanh. 2a. A 'congregation of God' is obviously one that is constituted in honor of God.

(37) Amos IX, 6. For אגדתו A.J.V. (following BDB) gives vault. R. Halafta however understood it as band (A.V. troop). M. says אגדת means a number of things held together by the five fingers of the hand, as well as the hand itself, consisting as it does of five separate fingers knit together.

(38) Ps. LXXXII, 1. The smallest Jewish Court consisted of three judges. In some versions (e.g. MV, R., B., Lowe's MS.) this Scriptural text is quoted for five (counting the two litigants in addition to the three judges), and Amos IX, 6, is cited for three as אגדת means a bundle of three, cf. M.; B. M. I, 8, [Of] how many [does] an 'Aguddah' of Shetaroth (= documents) [consist]? — [Of] three tied one to another. The term is also used for the binding of the ceremonial palm branch, myrtle, and willow twigs (Lev. XXIII, 40) (M. Sukkah III, 8). An 'Aguddah' of hyssop (Ex. XII, 22) consists of three stalks (M. Parah XI, 9). Tosaf. to Sukkah, 13a, referring to our Mishnah, upholds the allocation of Biblical texts

adopted in the versions used for this translation, since (a) in Ber. 6a, where the subject is the Divine Presence among ten (at prayer), three (sitting as judges), and two (studying Torah), the verse quoted for three is as here, viz., Ps. LXXXII, 1, In the midst of judges, etc. (there is no reference there to five); and (b) a comparison with Isa. XLVIII, 13, suggests that אגדת in Amos IX, 6, may be understood to mean a hand and would thus be appropriate as an allusion to five.

(39) Mal. III, 16. 'One with another' indicates the presence of two.

(40) Ex. XX, 21. 'Thee' indicates one person only who is responsible for mentioning God's Name.

(41) Some versions: b. Judah; a contemporary of R. Akiba.

(42) In Upper Galilee. Baer thinks it is identical with Berotha (Ezek. XLVII, 16), and Berothai (II Sam. VIII, 8), the precise location of which is uncertain (v. BDB).

(43) I Chron. XXIX, 14.

(44) Some versions: R. Jacob (b. Korshai); one of the teachers of Rabbi.

(45) This rendering is preferred because (a) the root bears that meaning, and (b) it is only recapitulation of that which has already been learnt that is recommended for wayfarers (v. Ta'an. 10b).

(46) אגדת seems to imply a deliberate act.

(47) Rashi omits this, as no scriptural text is quoted here. Lowe's MS. has the impersonal form מעלין עליו 'They account it to him'. It may be that the verse intended here is omitted because it is quoted in the next paragraph.

(48) MV and R. emphasize 'as if' because actually he does not thereby forfeit his life, as, after all, exclaiming 'how fine, etc.' is a form of adoration of God. It is only because learning is so much more important that the breaking off therefrom deserves severe condemnation.

(49) V. *supra* 4, n. 5.

(50) A Greek name, GR.\*\*

(51) Probably a Graecized form of Johanen.

(52) To say a thing in the name of him who said it, was a point of honor among the Rabbis (v. *infra* VI, 6), even as it was of the essence of a tradition of learning.

(53) Point, detail or subject.

(54) Viz., the 'righteous statutes and judgments, etc.' of the previous verse. Deut. IV, 9.

(55) *Ibid.*

(56) Lit. 'he sits down and'

(57) Or 'turns them away' or 'removes them'.

(58) A disciple of R. Johanan b. Zakkai.

(59) I.e., his moral convictions and conduct.

(60) Takes precedence in his estimation (B.); or, precedes in order of acquisition. If one already possesses firmly acquired moral habits, wisdom will strengthen his attachment to them and this practical

result, gained through wisdom, will encourage him to seek more wisdom (M.).

(61) I ARN, Ch. XXII, cites Ps. CXI, 10, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Cf. Prov. I, 7, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, and *ibid.* III, 7, Be not wise in thine own eyes; Fear the Lord, and depart from evil.

(62) Wisdom will have taught him the principles of higher conduct but, not being habituated to the latter, he will find it irksome and will give up wisdom, so that it might not trouble his conscience, or restrain his unprincipled conduct. Thus 'his wisdom will not endure' (M.). I ARN, Ch. XXII, reports R. Johanan b. Zakkai: 'A wise man who is not sin-fearing is like a skilled artisan who has no tools.'

(63) I ARN, *ibid.* cites Ex. XXIV, 7, All that the Lord hath spoken we shall observe and hearken (rendered in accordance with the Rabbinic interpretation which regards this as a declaration promising observance of the commandments, made by Israel before they had even heard the commandments). The general sense seems to be that one's observance of commandments should not depend on one's having achieved, by one's own wisdom, a full understanding of them. The more precepts one practices, the more will one seek to extend one's knowledge as to their meaning, purpose, and manner of observance. If, however, one acquires wisdom which he does not apply to his daily conduct, he will see no use in his wisdom and drop it.

(64) V. Prov. III, 4, So shalt thou find grace and good favor in the sight of God and man.

(65) The names are said to be Greek, GR.\*\* and GR.\*\* Maim. Introduction to 'Zera'im', Ch. 4, says he was a contemporary of Simeon the Righteous and lived on till the days of R. Akiba. Hyman, A., Toledoth, suggests that Maim. relies on J. Yeb. I and Yeb. 16a. If these passages be taken literally, R. Dosa actually knew also Ezra and Haggai, but, the reference to the seat once occupied by Haggai may easily have been to a seat so designated by a tradition known to R. Dosa (so already Hyman). He was a contemporary of R. Johanan b. Zakkai and a rich man. His dictum here reflects conduct prevailing in his social stratum. V. Bacher, Tradition, p. 29. AT I, p. 157.

(66) Late sleeping is decried in Prov. XXVI, 14, The door is turning upon its hinges, and the sluggard is still upon his bed. Early rising is, by implication, recommended, e.g. Ps. CXIX, 62, At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee; *ibid.* 147-8, I rose early at dawn and cried, I hoped in Thy word. Mine eyes forestalled the night-watches, that I might meditate in Thy word. Some take it to mean morning sleep that makes one late for the proper time for reciting the Shema', v. *supra* p. 22, n. 8.

(67) Because it makes one unfit for meditation or study.

(68) R. Jonah points out that just because of its pleasantness, which is due to love for children, one is likely to be tempted to listen to it for too long, and thus lose time that should be given to the study of Torah.

(69) Not necessary or casual intercourse with them is condemned here, but habitual and prolonged stay in the society of the characteristically ignorant and boorish, involving participation in their inane pursuits.

(70) For the phrase cf. *supra* II, 11.

(71) A contemporary of R. Johanan b. Zakkai whose disciple he may have been. His Aggadic interpretations were much sought after (v. Shab. 55b). He met his death through the treacherous cunning of a Samaritan informer who denounced him to Bar-Cochba during the siege of Bethar, ca. 135.

(72) **קדשים** Objects belonging or due to the sanctuary, either absolutely, in accordance with scriptural enactments, or by virtue of having been voluntarily dedicated thereto.

(73) I.e., puts him to shame. MV. reads **המאדים** 'he who causes etc. to redden.' **המלבין** is explained in B.M. 58b: 'the blush subsides and whiteness takes its place.'

(74) 'Of our father Abraham' not found in the parallels where the original reference is apparently to setting at naught God's covenant (with Israel) in general, e.g., Sifre to Num. XV, 22, ed. Friedman, *ibid.* III, p. 31b, where the covenant is identified with the Torah. In J. Sanh. XI, p. 27c, however, the phrase is explained: 'one stretching the foreskin' (to disguise circumcision). It seems that originally **מפר בריה** meant nullifying the covenant in general and that R. Eleazar of Modin applied it specifically to the covenant of circumcision. V. Buchler, *op. cit.*, pp. 97ff.

(75) Not found in most editions.

(76) Omitting (as do parallels cited *supra* n. 5) **שלא כהלכה** not according to the Halachah'. R. Hillel (a commentator on Aboth) quoted by Friedmann, Sifre, *ibid.* explains **מעיז פניו** R. Jonah **מהציר פניו** which explanations presuppose the absence of **שלא כהלכה** in their versions. Geiger, retaining **שלא כהלכה** understands by the phrase the allegorical interpretation of the Torah not in accordance with Halachah, (i.e., the authoritative rulings of the Law), with special reference to the Christians who taught that it is only the ideas symbolized by the precepts that mattered, but not their actual observance. Bacher (תנאים) s.v. **ערכי המדרש** p. 101, says **שלא כהלכה** was added by one who took **פנים** in the sense of 'interpretations' or 'meanings' (v. MV. p. 512), thus making the phrase mean 'publishing interpretations of the Torah'; as this could not, in itself, be considered a sin at all, much less such a grave one as contemplated here, he felt bound to add



השאלה של פנייה i.e. interpretations opposed to Halachah. But פנים in the sense of 'meanings' is not found in Tannaitic sources, its earliest use being by the Amora R. Jannai. V. Buchler, op. cit., p. 103. Guttman בחינת קיום המצוות (in Bericht jud.-Theol. Seminar, Breslau 1930), pp. 62-4, understands the allegorizers of the Alexandrian school who rejected the literal sense of the commandments and accepted only the symbolic.

(77) Lit., 'in his hand'.

(78) MV. says 'we do not read תורה, which word is also omitted in Lowe's MS. (rightly so according to Guttman, op. cit., p. 64, n. 4.)

(79) Sifre to Num. XV, 31: 'he deserves to be pushed out of the world.' R. Eleazar's stricture certainly refers to the antinomian teachings of Jewish Gnostics. V. Buchler, op. cit., p. 100. Guttman, op. cit., p. 64, points out that the first results of the allegorizing methods of Hellenistic Jews were the rejection of 1) circumcision (and obliteration of its effects), (v. I Macc. XVII); 2) sacrifices קדשים (v. particularly the Sibylline Oracles); 3) the holy days ומעדות (cf. Philo, who denounces those who honor the Sabbath idea on account of the allegorical significance of the number seven, yet do not observe the Sabbath).

(80) So B. קל often occurs in the Bible in the sense of 'swift', cf. infra V, 20.

(81) So ראש often so in Bible. The reading, in Lowe's MS. קל ראש which, if correct, would have the meaning (unparalleled elsewhere) of 'pliant' (as opposite to 'strong-headed') is to some extent borne out by MV. a.l.: הקל את ראשך

(82) תשחורת a difficult word. Its meaning here can only be surmised. There are various renderings of the word and these affect the meaning of the dictum. Some deriving it from שחור translate 'a black-haired, i.e. young, man' (as in Ekah Rab. to I, 2) which would make the whole mean 'be deferential to your seniors and condescending to your juniors.' Others connect it with שחור 'officer' (v. Sifre Deut. 6, p. 66b); the sense would thus be 'be submissive to a ruler and pleasant even to a lesser official.' Another translation is 'press-gang' (as in Seder Elijah R. Ch. 1), making the saying a piece of advice to accommodate oneself to supreme authority and its executive representatives however oppressive. The rendering adopted here derives תשחורת from שחר 'to seek', 'and appears to give, in conjunction with the context, the best sense.

(83) Cf. supra I, 15.

(84) Levity, irresponsibility. Some (e.g. R. Jonah) 'jesting when combined with light-headedness.'

(85) Lit. 'cause (someone's) feet to move', cf. Hos. XI, 3.

(86) According to Buchler. Some Types of Jewish Palestinian Piety, pp. 62-7, 'Jesting' שחוק denotes trifling with sexual modesty. The verb (in the form

שחוק) has already in Biblical Hebrew (Gen. XXXIX, 14, 17) the meaning of immoral advances. שחוק is often clearly so used in Rabbinic Hebrew. In ARN I and II this part of the dictum is brought into line with the parts following, viz. 'a fence (safeguard) for honor is not to jest (or, act immodestly).'

(87) מסורה (so vocalized by Bacher). The traditionally fixed text of the Bible, particularly the Pentateuch, on the correctness of every detail of which depends not only the interpretation of the Scriptures in general, but the determination of laws meant for practical observance (Halachah). The term מסורה as used by R. Akiba (who is said to have based interpretations even on the apparently ornamental 'titles' תגי = crowns) attached to certain letters; v. Men. 29b) already contained the idea of the specialized branch of learning which set itself the task of noting and recording every detail — down to the minutest — of the text of the Scriptures, and bears the name Masorah מסורה par excellence, v. Bacher op. cit. s.v. מסורה P. 74 and Buchler, op. cit., p. 62.

(88) Cf. supra I, 1.

(89) Omitted in Lowe's MS. and in ARN. The commentators explain the saying by quoting, from Shab. 119a, the play on the words עשר תעשר (Deut. XIV, 22), viz. עשר בשביל שתעשר, 'Give tithes in order that thou mayest be made rich' (by R. Johanan, 3rd cent.). Our dictum would thus mean that the giving of tithes is a fence which protects, and even makes for an increase in, wealth. L., however, interprets 'tithes are A fence against (v. end of next note) the dangers attending the possession of wealth;' wealth is liable to make its possessor too proud, and lead him to attribute his success to himself alone and to discount or disregard the factor of God's help, but the giving of tithes is a safeguard against such a notion, as it is bound to bring to his mind the truth that the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof (Ps. XXIV, 1). Cf. Deut. VIII, 13-18, lest when thy silver and gold is multiplied then thy heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God and thou say in thy heart: 'My power and the might of my hand hath gotten me this wealth.' But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth.

(90) פרישות Perishuth. The manner of life of the פרושים (Pharisees); v. M. a. l. and more fully Nahmanides to Lev. XIX, 2, who says, 'separating oneself, withdrawing and keeping away, restraining oneself, from going to the full length of permitted conduct, when taking such advantage is likely to conduce to something unseemly, e.g. gluttony, insobriety, unbecoming language, sexual over-indulgence. Such self-restraint is the standard of the conduct of the פרושים (Pharisees).' Vows can be helpful to Perishuth, inasmuch as when one has made vows with regard to particular things, he has thereby

acquired the capacity for a general self-discipline and a more complete aloofness from everything improper. I ARN, Ch. XXVI and II ARN, Ch. XXXIII, invert the saying **סייג לנדרים פרישות** 'A fence to vows is self-restraint'. As we know that R. Akiba discouraged vows (I ARN, Ch. XXVI, v. Buchler, op. cit., p. 64, n. 1), this reading may be the correct one and the dictum would mean, Perishuth is a fence (guard, defense) against vows, i.e., a life of Perishuth makes it unnecessary to indulge in vows, which in themselves are not wholly commendable. v. Schechter, *Some Aspects*, pp. 199-218, Buchler, op. cit., pp. 62-5.

(91) Cf. supra I, 17. Buchler, op. cit., p. 72, contends that as safeguards for Torah and Hokma are given, the admonitions in this Mishnah were intended, in the first place, for scholars. The reference to Perishuth bears out this contention.

(92) L. utilizes this passage to controvert the notion prevailing in some quarters, that the Rabbinic conception of God's fatherly love was narrow and chauvinistic. It is inconceivable, he says, that one should deny the merits of eminent Gentiles who have rendered great humanitarian services, such as Jenner, the pioneer in vaccination, Guttenberg, the inventor of printing, Drake, who introduced into Europe the potato which has often averted the worst consequences of famine, Reuchlin, the great humanist who at the beginning of the 16th century defended the Talmud against the machinations of the apostate Pfefferkorn, who instigated Emperor Maximilian I to order the confiscation and destruction of the Talmud.

(93) Gen. IX, 6 is quoted and not I, 26, 27, because whilst in the latter passage the fact is just recorded, in the one quoted we are told that God informed man (to wit Noah) of the fact.

(94) Deut. XIV, 1 is quoted and not Israel is my first-born son, Ex. IV, 22, because the latter was addressed to Pharaoh; the first occasion the Israelites were told that they were God's children was in the passage quoted, v. Buchler, *Sin and Atonement*, p. 80; Kohler, *Theologie des Judentums*, p. 195.

(95) I.e., the Torah, cf. Ps. XIX, 11, More desired are they (the Ordinances of the Lord) than gold, yea than much fine gold.

(96) The idea that the Torah (or Wisdom) pre-existed creation, and 'assisted' thereat, or formed the 'architect's plan' thereof, is said to go back to such passages as Prov. III, 19, The Lord by wisdom founded the earth; *ibid.* VIII, 22-32. (Wisdom says), The Lord made me as the beginning of his way, the first of His works of old When there were no depths no fountains before the mountains, before the hills was I brought forth While as yet He had not made the earth when He established the heavens, I was there then was I by him a nursling The Hebrew for

nursling **אמון** was understood as **אמן** a craftsman' or 'architect'.

(97) Prov. IV, 2.

(98) Cf. I ARN, Ch. XXXIX; II Ch. XLIV. In the latter this Mishnah and the following are in the name of R. Eliezer son

of R. Jose the Galilean.

(99) MV., 'seen'. i.e., God sees all. The verb **צפה** often means looking ahead in time or distance. When this is said of God, 'foreseen' is, strictly speaking, not applicable or admissible, as God is independent of time and space, i.e., there is with Him neither past nor future nor distance, and he 'sees' everything at once. Marmorstein, *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God*, p. 159, points out that the idea of God's prescience in Rabbinic literature goes back to Simeon b. Shetah (or Judah b. Tabbai) who called God **בעל מהשבות** (Master of Thoughts); Sanh. 37b, Schechter, *Some Aspects*, p. 285, refers to ARN (Addenda), pp. 75a and 81b, from which it would seem that **צפוי** was taken by some to refer to man. In one case (p. 75a) 'everything is seen by man: by means of the keys of wisdom' granted to him, man can learn what the heavenly likeness" is, and choose the right way.' The other reference (p. 81b) takes **צפוי** to mean 'covered', 'hidden' (from the root **צפה** which in the Pi'el form means 'cover', 'hide') and explains: since man sinned, the light of wisdom was hidden from him and he knows not what will happen in the future.' MV., p. 514, and Aruch s.v. **טעף**. quote a reading **צפון** 'hidden'.

(100) Or 'Authority (over self)' i.e., free-will. v. Oesterley, *The Sayings of the Jewish Fathers a.l.* Commentators quote Deut. XXX, 19, I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life as the basis for the doctrine of free-will in Judaism. Kohler, op. cit. p. 175, cites Gen. IV, 7, and the Midrash thereto. Schechter, op. cit., p. 284 ff. says the parallels in ARN make it doubtful whether R. Akiba here really meant the antithesis of predestination and free-will. Kohler, op. cit., Ch. XXXVII, points out that Judaism teaches free-will in matters of ethical conduct.

(101) Cf. Ps. CXLV, 9, The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. This, according to the Rabbis, includes even the wicked.

(102) Readings differ here. Some omit **ויב** e.g., Lowe's MS., v. Taylor a.l. The version in Aruch *ibid.* and M. instead of **והכל** read **לא אבל** 'but not according to. . .' M. explains: Divine goodness is exercised towards man not by reason of the greatness of a deed, but according to the number of deeds, i.e., repeated and ever new good deeds. But see L. The Version in Aruch explains: Men are judged by God's goodness and not in accordance with their doings. Bacher AT. I, p. 275, n. 2, refers to R. Akiba's saying in Koh. R. to X, 1, 'Man is adjudged in accordance with the preponderance of his deeds; he should always

consider himself half guilty and half innocent; one more good deed and it is well with him, one more evil deed, woe to him.' Some seem to understand by העולם mankind as a whole; and by הכל all men in their individual capacities. Others: 'In this world (העולם) all are judged with kindness (else sinners would be condemned outright); but in the hereafter, everybody (יהכל) is judged according to (the Preponderance of) his (good or bad) deeds.'

(103) V. supra, p. 38, n. 4.

(104) Life and all its benefits.

(105) A guarantee of good conduct. MV.: the soul.

(106) All are liable to be caught if they attempt to evade the pledge. For the expression, cf. Ezek. XXXII, 3.

(107) The divine store of gifts intended for man.

(108) God.

(109) פנקס = GR.\*\* writing-tablet, list, register, account-book.

(110) Cf. supra II, 1.

(111) The agents for the execution of divine justice, e.g. suffering, calamity, sickness. (12) Or (lit.) 'knowledge', i.e., whether or not he realizes, or acknowledges, that the visitations coming upon him are in punishment for his sins. Our translation means: whether he willingly undergoes penance for his sins, or he unrepentantly resents the punishment.

(112) There is no vindictiveness in it.

(113) The reward of those who discharge their obligations is assured in the hereafter. B.: 'everybody is fitted for the banquet,' i.e. all men are ab initio intended to have a share in the spiritual feast of the world to come. R. Meshullam b. Kalonymos quoted in Aruch s.v. סעד and in MV., says 'banquet', here is an expression for death, and explains thus (after Shab. 152a): Just as all enter for a banquet by one entrance, but are allotted seats at the banquet according to their status, so at death, it is true, all go through the same door, but once they have entered the hereafter they are treated severally in accordance with their merits. R. Jonah: 'The purpose of all this is to make ready for the banquet of the future life.' Incidentally this Mishnah reflects the traders' methods of those days.

(114) A younger contemporary of R. Gamaliel II, R. Joshua b. Hananiah, etc. He was chosen Nasi at a very young age when R. Gamaliel, who had become unpopular, was forced to vacate the Patriarchate. When the latter was restored, R. Eleazar b. Azariah retired to the second office of Ab-Beth-din. He used his great wealth to facilitate the approaches made by the Rabbis to the Roman authorities on behalf of the Jews.

(115) Used here for religion in general, any religion that postulates divine authority for moral conduct (L.).

(116) Or 'cultured behavior', Derech Eretz. Unless rooted in religion (in the above sense), moral and

cultured conduct lacks the source which feeds and sustains it perennially.

(117) Conversely, religious belief is sterile when it does not express itself in ethical conduct and becoming behavior.

(118) V. supra 9 and notes.

(119) בינה Binah, The ability to make logical deductions (v. B.).

(120) דעה Da'ath, The ability to arrive at the reasons for things (v. B.). Perhaps better rendered '(capacity for) thinking.'

(121) קמח flour v. infra V. 15 p. 69 n. 10.

(122) Lack of food impairs one's mental powers. Or, if Torah is understood here as earlier in the paragraph, starvation is liable to have an adverse effect on one's moral faculties.

(123) Cf. Deut. VIII, 3, Man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.

(124) Cf. supra Mishnah 9.

(125) Jer. XVII, 6 and 8. Both quotations are omitted in Lowe's MS. In the context, the first refers to 'the man that trusteth in man,' the second to 'the man that trusteth in the Lord.' Placing wisdom before deeds means relying on unaided human abilities. The practice of deeds commanded by God, whether or not one's mind comprehends them fully, means placing implicit trust in Him.

(126) A disciple of R. Akiba: In ARN I and II only the second half of this Mishnah is attributed to him; the first half is in the name of R. Johanan b. Nuri.

(127) The name for a section of laws dealing with bird. sacrifices (v. Lev. XII, 8; XIV, 4, 22, 49; XV, 14, 29).

(128) A term for the regulations whereby the times of commencement, and the duration, of 'uncleanness of women, by reason of menstruation, are calculated and determined.

(129) גופי תורה Lowe's MS.

(130) Astronomy.

(131) So MV, also Jastrow, who derives it from GR.\*\* From this the term גמטריא could have acquired its better known meaning, viz. the use, for exegetical purposes, of the letters of alphabet in their numerical value, or as initials of words. Another derivation is from GR.\*\*; the word then meaning 'mensuration' in its various forms. V. Sanh. (Sonc. ed.) p. 121, n. 4.

(132) Desirable but not essential. Some: 'appetizers' that create a desire for further knowledge. Others derive from GR.\*\* 'the outer circle' (of wisdom) as opposed to גופי הלכות the core and essence of learning. The reason for this differentiation is that the former consist of positive commandments, i.e. 'deeds', 'works', whilst the latter are typical of 'wisdom'. The particular instances of the former appear to have been chosen for the following reasons: In one case, (Kinnim), the precepts concerned are operative only

when the Temple in Jerusalem exists and functions, and in the other, (Pithehe Niddah, they deal with unpleasant details; and yet, the inference is, even these precepts, apparently of lesser moment and of lesser attractiveness, form part of the essence of knowledge for the Israelite. The instances in the latter category are singled out, because in one case (astronomy), it is the most comprehensive branch of wisdom and is, in addition, calculated to increase our adoration of God by giving man a fuller conception of His wonderful Universe, and in the other case (arithmetic or mensuration) it is a science of great mind-exercising, as well as of highly utilitarian, value. Even so, the inference is, these sciences are of secondary importance to the study of the practical precepts of the Torah.

## Avoth Chapter 4

**MISHNAH 1.** BEN ZOMA<sup>1</sup> SAID: WHO IS HE THAT IS WISE? HE WHO LEARNS FROM EVERY MAN, AS IT IS SAID: FROM ALL WHO TAUGHT ME HAVE I GAINED UNDERSTANDING, WHEN THY TESTIMONIES WERE MY MEDITATION.<sup>2</sup> WHO IS HE THAT IS MIGHTY?<sup>3</sup> HE WHO SUBDUES HIS [EVIL] INCLINATION,<sup>4</sup> AS IT IS SAID: HE THAT IS SLOW TO ANGER IS BETTER THAN THE MIGHTY; AND HE THAT RULETH HIS SPIRIT THAN HE THAT TAKETH A CITY.<sup>5</sup> WHO IS HE THAT IS RICH?<sup>6</sup> HE WHO REJOICES IN HIS LOT, AS IT IS SAID: WHEN THOU EATEST OF THE LABOR OF THY HANDS, HAPPY SHALT THOU BE, AND IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEE.<sup>7</sup> HAPPY SHALT THOU BE — IN THIS WORLD, AND IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEE — IN THE WORLD TO COME. WHO IS HE THAT IS HONORED? HE WHO HONORS HIS FELLOW-MEN, AS IT IS SAID: FOR THEM THAT HONOR ME I WILL HONOR, AND THEY THAT DESPISE ME SHALL BE LIGHTLY ESTEEMED.<sup>8</sup>

**MISHNAH 2.** BEN 'AZZAI<sup>9</sup> SAID: RUN<sup>10</sup> TO [PERFORM] AN EASY PRECEPT,<sup>11</sup> AS [YOU WOULD] IN [THE CASE OF] A DIFFICULT ONE,<sup>12</sup> AND FLEE<sup>13</sup> FROM TRANSGRESSION; FOR [ONE] PRECEPT DRAWS [IN ITS TRAIN<sup>14</sup> ANOTHER] PRECEPT, AND [ONE] TRANSGRESSION DRAWS [IN ITS TRAIN

ANOTHER] TRANSGRESSION;<sup>15</sup> FOR THE RECOMPENSE FOR [PERFORMING] A PRECEPT IS A PRECEPT, AND THE RECOMPENSE FOR [COMMITTING] A TRANSGRESSION IS A TRANSGRESSION.

**MISHNAH 3.** HE USED TO SAY:<sup>16</sup> DESPISE NOT ANY MAN, AND DISCRIMINATE NOT<sup>17</sup> AGAINST ANY THING,<sup>18</sup> FOR THERE IS NO MAN THAT HAS NOT HIS HOUR, AND THERE IS NO THING THAT HAS NOT ITS PLACE.<sup>19</sup>

**MISHNAH 4.** R. LEVITAS (A MAN) OF JABNEH<sup>20</sup> SAID: BE EXCEEDING<sup>21</sup> LOWLY OF SPIRIT,<sup>22</sup> FOR THE EXPECTATION OF MORTAL MAN IS [THAT HE WILL TURN TO] WORMS.<sup>23</sup> R. JOHANAN B. BEROKAH<sup>24</sup> SAID: WHOEVER PROFANES THE NAME OF HEAVEN<sup>25</sup> IN SECRET,<sup>26</sup> THEY<sup>27</sup> EXACT THE PENALTY FROM HIM IN THE OPEN.<sup>28</sup> [IN THIS RESPECT, IT IS ALL] ONE [WHETHER ONE HAS ACTED] IN ERROR, AND [IT IS ALL] ONE<sup>29</sup> [WHETHER ONE HAS ACTED] WITH PRESUMPTION, IN [A CASE WHERE THE RESULT IS] THE PROFANATION OF THE NAME.<sup>30</sup>

**MISHNAH 5.** R. ISHMAEL<sup>31</sup> SAID: HE WHO LEARNS IN ORDER TO TEACH,<sup>32</sup> THEY AFFORD HIM<sup>33</sup> ADEQUATE MEANS TO LEARN AND TO TEACH; AND HE WHO LEARNS IN ORDER TO PRACTICE,<sup>34</sup> THEY AFFORD HIM ADEQUATE MEANS TO LEARN AND TO TEACH<sup>35</sup> AND TO PRACTICE. R. ZADOK<sup>36</sup> SAID: MAKE THEM<sup>37</sup> NOT A CROWN WHEREWITH TO MAGNIFY THYSELF, NOR A SPADE<sup>38</sup>, WHEREWITH TO DIG;<sup>39</sup> EVEN SO WAS HILLEL WONT TO SAY, 'AND HE WHO MAKES [UNWORTHY] USE OF THE CROWN [OF LEARNING] PASSETH AWAY.'<sup>40</sup> LO, [HENCE] THOU HAST LEARNT: ANYONE WHO DERIVES WORLDLY BENEFIT<sup>41</sup> FROM THE WORDS OF THE TORAH, REMOVES HIS LIFE FROM THE WORLD.<sup>42</sup>

**MISHNAH 6.** R. JOSE<sup>43</sup> SAID: WHOEVER HONORS THE TORAH<sup>44</sup> IS HIMSELF<sup>45</sup>



# OVOS

HONORED BY MEN, AND WHOEVER DISHONORS THE TORAH IS HIMSELF DISHONORED BY MEN.

*MISHNAH 7.* R. ISHMAEL<sup>46</sup> SAID: HE WHO REFRAINS HIMSELF FROM JUDGMENT,<sup>47</sup> RIDS HIMSELF OF ENMITY<sup>48</sup> AND ROBBERY<sup>49</sup> AND VAIN SWEARING;<sup>50</sup> BUT HE WHOSE HEART IS OVER-CONFIDENT IN GIVING A JUDICIAL DECISION,<sup>51</sup> IS FOOLISH,<sup>52</sup> WICKED<sup>53</sup> AND OF UNCOUTH SPIRIT.<sup>54</sup>

*MISHNAH 8.* HE USED TO SAY: JUDGE NOT ALONE,<sup>55</sup> FOR NONE MAY JUDGE ALONE SAVE ONE;<sup>56</sup> AND SAY NOT ACCEPT MY VIEW', FOR THEY ARE FREE BUT NOT THOU.<sup>57</sup>

*MISHNAH 9.* R. JONATHAN<sup>58</sup> SAID: WHOEVER FULFILLS THE TORAH OUT OF [A STATE OF] POVERTY,<sup>59</sup> HIS END [WILL BE] TO FULFIL IT OUT OF [A STATE OF] WEALTH;<sup>60</sup> AND WHOEVER DISCARDS THE TORAH OUT OF [A STATE OF] WEALTH,<sup>61</sup> HIS END [WILL BE] TO DISCARD IT OUT OF [A STATE OF] POVERTY.<sup>62</sup>

*MISHNAH 10.* R. MEIR<sup>63</sup> SAID: DO [RATHER] LESS BUSINESS, AND BUSY THYSELF [MAINLY] WITH THE TORAH,<sup>64</sup> AND BE LOWLY OF SPIRIT BEFORE ALL MEN.<sup>65</sup> IF THOU HAST [ONCE] BEEN IDLE IN [REGARD] TO] THE TORAH, THOU WILT HAVE MANY [MORE] OCCASIONS FOR IDLENESS BEFORE THEE,<sup>66</sup> BUT IF THOU HAST LABORED AT THE TORAH, THERE IS<sup>67</sup> MUCH REWARD TO GIVE UNTO THEE.<sup>68</sup>

*MISHNAH 11.* R. ELIEZER B. JACOB<sup>69</sup> SAID: HE WHO PERFORMS ONE PRECEPT ACQUIRES FOR HIMSELF ONE ADVOCATE,<sup>70</sup> AND HE WHO COMMITS ONE TRANSGRESSION ACQUIRES FOR HIMSELF ONE ACCUSER.<sup>71</sup> REPENTANCE<sup>72</sup> AND GOOD DEEDS ARE AS A SHIELD<sup>73</sup> AGAINST PUNISHMENT.<sup>74</sup> R. JOHANAN<sup>75</sup> HANDELAR SAID: EVERY ASSEMBLY WHICH

IS FOR THE NAME OF HEAVEN,<sup>76</sup> [WILL IN] THE END THEREOF BECOME [OF] PERMANENT [VALUE]; AND EVERY ASSEMBLY WHICH IS NOT FOR THE NAME OF HEAVEN, [WILL IN] THE END THEREOF NOT BECOME [OF] PERMANENT [VALUE].<sup>77</sup>

*MISHNAH 12.* R. ELEAZAR<sup>78</sup> B. SHAMMUA'<sup>79</sup> SAID: LET THE HONOR OF THY DISCIPLE BE AS DEAR TO THEE AS THINE OWN,<sup>80</sup> AND THE HONOR OF THY COLLEAGUE AS THE REVERENCE<sup>81</sup> FOR THY TEACHER,<sup>82</sup> AND THE REVERENCE FOR THY TEACHER AS THE FEAR OF HEAVEN.<sup>83</sup>

*MISHNAH 13.* R. JUDAH<sup>84</sup> SAID: BE CAREFUL IN STUDY,<sup>85</sup> FOR AN ERROR IN STUDY AMOUNTS TO PRESUMPTION.<sup>86</sup> R. SIMEON<sup>87</sup> SAID: THERE ARE THREE CROWN<sup>84</sup> :<sup>88</sup> THE CROWN OF TORAH,<sup>89</sup> THE CROWN OF PRIESTHOOD,<sup>90</sup> AND THE CROWN OF ROYALTY; BUT THE CROWN OF A GOOD NAME EXCELS<sup>91</sup> THEM ALL.<sup>92</sup>

*MISHNAH 14.* R. NEHORAI<sup>93</sup> SAID: GO AS A [VOLUNTARY] EXILE TO A PLACE OF TORAH<sup>94</sup> — AND SAY NOT THAT IT WILL COME AFTER THEE<sup>95</sup> — FOR [IT IS] THY FELLOW[-STUDENT]S WHO WILL MAKE IT PERMANENT IN THY KEEPING<sup>96</sup> AND LEAN NOT UP ON THINE OWN UNDERSTANDING.<sup>97</sup>

*MISHNAH 15.* R. JANNAI<sup>98</sup> SAID: IT IS NOT IN OUR POWER [TO EXPLAIN THE REASON] EITHER OF THE SECURITY OF THE WICKED,<sup>99</sup> OR EVEN OF THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.<sup>100</sup> R. MATHIA B. HERESH<sup>101</sup> SAID: BE FIRST IN [ENQUIRING AFTER] THE PEACE<sup>102</sup> OF ALL MEN; AND BE THOU A TAIL UNTO LIONS, AND NOT A HEAD UNTO FOXES.<sup>103</sup>

*MISHNAH 16.* R. JACOB<sup>104</sup> SAID: THIS WORLD IS LIKE UNTO A VESTIBULE<sup>105</sup> BEFORE THE WORLD TO COME; PREPARE THYSELF<sup>106</sup> IN THE VESTIBULE, SO THAT THOU MAYEST ENTER THE BANQUETING-HALL.<sup>107</sup>

**MISHNAH 17.** HE USED TO SAY: MORE BEAUTIFUL IS ONE HOUR [SPENT] IN REPENTANCE AND GOOD DEEDS<sup>108</sup> IN THIS WORLD, THAN ALL THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME;<sup>109</sup> AND MORE BEAUTIFUL IS ONE HOUR OF THE EVEN-TEMPERED SPIRIT OF THE WORLD TO COME<sup>110</sup> , THAN ALL THE LIFE OF THIS WORLD.<sup>111</sup>

**MISHNAH 18.** R. SIMEON B. ELEAZAR<sup>112</sup> SAID: PACIFY<sup>113</sup> NOT THY FELLOW IN THE HOUR OF HIS ANGER;<sup>114</sup> NOR COMFORT HIM IN THE HOUR WHEN HIS DEAD LIES BEFORE HIM,<sup>115</sup> NOR QUESTION HIM AT THE TIME OF HIS VOW;<sup>116</sup> NOR STRIVE TO SEE HIM IN THE HOUR OF HIS DISGRACE.<sup>117</sup>

**MISHNAH 19.** SAMUEL HA-KATAN<sup>118</sup> SAID [QUOTING FROM SCRIPTURE]: REJOICE NOT WHEN THINE ENEMY FALLETH AND LET NOT THY HEART BE GLAD WHEN HE STUMBLETH.<sup>119</sup> LEST THE LORD SEE IT, AND IT DISPLEASETH HIM, AND HE TURN AWAY HIS WRATH FROM HIM.<sup>120</sup>

**MISHNAH 20.** ELISHA B. ABUYAH<sup>121</sup> SAID: HE WHO LEARNS [WHEN] A CHILD, UNTO WHAT IS HE [TO BE] COMPARED?<sup>122</sup> — UNTO INK WRITTEN UPON A NEW WRITING SHEET;<sup>123</sup> AND HE WHO LEARNS [WHEN] AN OLD MAN,<sup>124</sup> UNTO WHAT IS HE LIKE? — UNTO INK WRITTEN ON A RUBBED WRITING SHEET.<sup>125</sup> R. JOSE B. JUDAH (A MAN) OF KEFAR HA-BABLI<sup>126</sup> SAID: HE WHO LEARNS FROM THE YOUNG, UNTO WHAT IS HE [TO BE] COMPARED? UNTO ONE WHO EATS UNRIPE GRAPES, AND DRINKS WINE FROM HIS VAT;<sup>127</sup> AND HE WHO LEARNS FROM THE OLD, UNTO WHAT IS HE [TO BE] COMPARED? UNTO ONE WHO EATS RIPE GRAPES, AND DRINKS OLD WINE.<sup>128</sup> RABBI<sup>129</sup> SAID: REGARD NOT THE CONTAINER<sup>130</sup> BUT THAT WHICH IS THEREIN: THERE IS A NEW CONTAINER FULL OF OLD [WINE], AND AN OLD

[CONTAINER] IN WHICH THERE IS NOT EVEN NEW [WINE].<sup>131</sup>

**MISHNAH 21.** R. ELEAZAR HA-KAPPAR<sup>132</sup> SAID: JEALOUSY,<sup>133</sup> CUPIDITY<sup>134</sup> AND [THE DESIRE FOR] HONOR PUT A MAN OUT OF THE WORLD.<sup>135</sup>

**MISHNAH 22.** HE USED TO SAY: THE BORN [ARE DESTINED] TO DIE, THE DEAD TO BE BROUGHT TO LIFE,<sup>136</sup> AND THE LIVING<sup>137</sup> TO BE JUDGED; [IT IS, THEREFORE, FOR THEM<sup>138</sup> ] TO KNOW AND TO MAKE KNOWN, SO THAT IT BECOME KNOWN,<sup>139</sup> THAT HE IS GOD, HE THE FASHIONER,<sup>140</sup> HE THE CREATOR, HE THE DISCERNER,<sup>141</sup> HE THE JUDGE, HE THE WITNESS,<sup>142</sup> HE THE COMPLAINANT,<sup>143</sup> AND THAT HE IS OF A CERTAINTY<sup>144</sup> TO JUDGE, BLESSED BE HE,<sup>145</sup> BEFORE WHOM THERE IS NO UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, NOR FORGETTING, NOR RESPECT OF PERSONS, NOR TAKING OF BRIBES,<sup>146</sup> FOR ALL IS HIS.<sup>147</sup> AND KNOW THAT ALL IS ACCORDING TO THE RECKONING.<sup>148</sup> AND LET NOT THY [EVIL] INCLINATION<sup>149</sup> ASSURE THEE THAT THE GRAVE IS A PLACE OF REFUGE FOR THEE;<sup>150</sup> FOR WITHOUT THY WILL<sup>151</sup> WAST THOU FASHIONED, WITHOUT THY WILL WAST THOU BORN, WITHOUT THY WILL LIVEST THOU, WITHOUT THY WILL WILT THOU DIE,<sup>152</sup> AND WITHOUT THY WILL ART THOU OF A CERTAINTY<sup>153</sup> TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT AND RECKONING<sup>154</sup> BEFORE THE KING OF THE KINGS OF KINGS, BLESSED BE HE.

(1) Simeon b. Zoma, a disciple of R. Joshua b. Hananiah. His own name is omitted as also that of his colleague, Simeon b. Azzai (v. infra, Mishnah 2). because they both died at an early age, before ordination (R.); their scholarship was nevertheless highly esteemed. After his death he was praised as the last of the (great) homileticians (Sotah IX. 15). though not many examples of his Aggadic exegesis are preserved. He was a devotee of mystical studies which, according to some, affected his mind. (V. Bacher AT I, p. 422ff.)

(2) Ps. CXIX, 99. This translation is in accordance with the interpretation presupposed here. The second part of the quotation is not given in all editions.

(3) I ARN 'the mightiest among the mighty'.

(4) I Yezer. V. A.Z. (Sonc. ed.) p. 22, n. 7.

(5) Prov. XVI, 32.

(6) I ARN 'the richest among the rich'. In addition to the questions as to the mightiest and richest, I ARN has, 'Who is the most unpretentious (עליו) among persons of unpretentious disposition? He who is as unpretentious as Moses', but no question as to who is honored.

(7) Ps. CXXVIII, 2.

(8) 1 Sam. II, 30. Real honor comes from God, and the measure in which we honor man, created in the image of God, is the measure of the honor we give to God: if we honor God by honoring man, God will honor us. R.: God says: Them that honor Me, by honoring men (who are entitled to honor, e.g. parents, the aged, the learned), I shall honor.

R. Jonah: If God honors those who honor Him, notwithstanding that all His creatures, by their mere existence and without deliberate or conscious effort, bring Him honor (cf. Isa. XLIII, 7), it follows, with greater force, that human beings (who are not entitled to honor automatically or to the same degree as God is), should reciprocate by honoring those who honor them.

(9) Cf. supra, p. 43. n. 1. Ben 'Azzai was first a disciple of R. Joshua. Hananiah, and later stood towards R. Akiba in the alternating relationships of disciple and younger colleague. His death is attributed to his having 'peered into the Garden' of theosophic speculation (which some identify with Gnosticism), though in some sources he is named among the first victims of the Hadrianic persecutions. (V. Bacher, AT., I, pp. 408-9.)

(10) Show eagerness, seize the opportunity. cf. infra V, 20.

(11) Cf. P5. CXIX, 60. One is more liable to be slack and procrastinating with regard to an easy task, and thus forget it entirely; to obviate this one should hasten to perform it as soon as it presents itself.

(12) This clause is not in all versions.

(13) Not merely avoid, but as quickly as you can, put as long a distance as possible between transgression and yourself (L.). In both cases (i.e. of fulfillment of a precept and of avoidance of transgression) Ben 'Azzai advocates quickness of resolve and action (Buchler, Sin and Atonement, p. 309).

(14) Automatically (Buchler, *ibid.*).

(15) This saying has been explained variously: (i) Virtue is its own reward, and sin its own penalty. (ii) The spiritual joy one derives from the performance of a divine precept, (Mizwah) is in itself a Mizwah, i.e., a valuable religious experience. (iii) The practical gain from the carrying out of a precept, is the new precept which it automatically brings in its train. See Buchler, *ibid.*, for a fine analysis of the dictum.

(16) I ARN, Ch. XXIII, appears to attribute this dictum to R. Nehorai.

(17) מפליג a difficult word variously interpreted: 'place at a distance,' 'consider far off and unimportant, or impossible,' 'treat slightly.' 'despise,' 'cavil, or carp at'. The translation given here combines the literal meaning of the verb with the general sense of the dictum, as indicated by the context and adopted by commentators.

(18) Or 'word' or 'matter'. ARN adds: 'For it is said: Whoso despiseth the word shall suffer thereby, but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded (Prov. XIII, 13).' evidently taking דבר in the Mishnah to mean 'word (of God)'. This citation suggests that ARN took the whole dictum as a parallel to Mishnah 1 and 2 thus: Who is wise? He who learns from every man — there is no man that has not his hour. Run to perform an easy (seemingly unimportant) commandment-Discriminate not against any word (of divine command). . . for there is no word (precept), however abstruse or unimportant it may seem, that has not its place.

(19) The sense in which this Mishnah is generally understood is: No person or object or matter is so unimportant that you can be sure that you will not have to reckon with it, either for good or for evil, at some time or in some place or in some circumstances.

(20) A contemporary of R. Akiba, of whom we know only this saying in our Mishnah, and some passages attributed to him in Pirke di R. Eliezer.

(21) מאד מאד M. (followed by B. and R. Jonah) explains: Why this accentuated deviation from the advocacy of a middle course? Because, man being naturally over-inclined to pride, it is necessary to over-emphasize the quality of self-depreciation.

(22) Some editions add, 'before all men'. The whole dictum is missing from Lowe's MS. where the following saying is in the name of R. Levitas instead of that of R. Johanan b. Broka.

(23) V. supra III, 1.

(24) A disciple of R. Joshua.

(25) V. supra p. 3, n. 2, also p. 7, n. 10.

(26) How can any secret misdeed be a profanation of the Name, which necessarily implies a knowledge of the sin by at least one other than the guilty person? Tosaf. Yom Tob says: When the sin can be committed only together with another person, e.g. prohibited sexual intercourse. L.: There are two kinds of 'profaners of the Name': (a) one who commits a sin, making it clear to others that he contemptuously disregards the divine commandments; (b) one who transgresses secretly, not because he is concerned for the Glory of the Name of God, but for his own reputation among his fellow men, by whom he wishes to be regarded as a pious man. The latter is profaning the Name in secret, and it is this duplicity that is to be exposed by punishment in public. V.: A sin committed in secret which, should it become known, would cause a profanation of the Name.

- (27) Used impersonally.
- (28) חלול השם (Profanation of the Name) was considered so grave that R. Akiba taught that a person guilty thereof is not entitled to divine forgiveness.
- (29) Lit., one one', cf. supra II, 9.
- (30) M. insists that only in respect of being punished openly is there no difference between one who commits profanation of the Name in error and one who does so willfully. In respect of the actual nature of the punishment (as is the case with reference to all sins), the Torah clearly distinguishes between the unwitting and presumptuous sinner (Lev. IV and V).
- (31) Some texts add 'his son', i.e. of R. Johanan b. Berokah.
- (32) Cf. supra p. 22, n. 5.
- (33) II ARN, Ch. XXXII, 'they do not afford him', so also R. who explains: If his only object in learning is that he might become a teacher, i.e., be addressed as 'Rabbi', his efforts at learning do not enjoy the favor of Heaven. I ARN, Ch. XXVII, has our version.
- (34) Cf. supra I, 17, 'Study is not the most important thing, but deed.'
- (35) Some texts insert here 'to observe'.
- (36) Probably the one who was contemporary of R. Johanan b. Zakkai. First century.
- (37) I.e., the words of the Torah. Some texts 'it'.
- (38) In I Sam. XIII, 20, and Ps. LXXIV, 5, קרדום = axe. It may have been two tools in one, one side being a broad blade for a hatchet, and the other a pointed one for breaking up 'ground. V. fast. s.v. and Oesterley, 'Sayings', ad loc.
- (39) Lowe's MS. and R. לאכל מהן lit., 'to eat of them' which Taylor translates, 'an axe, to live by them', evidently taking אכל in the sense of 'enjoy', 'have the use of', 'have benefit from', as e.g. in Pe'ah I, 1. R. Jonah has להחוך 'to cut'.
- (40) V. supra I, 13.
- (41) Cf. the reading preserved in R.
- (42) Our translation is In accordance with the maxim of Hillel which gave rise to this thought. R. however understood 'takes his reward in this world'. Seemingly he translated 'takes his life (i.e. all the benefits to which he may be entitled) out of this world.' Tosaf. Yom Tob 'removes himself from the life of the world to come. M. bases on R. Zadok's dictum a vigorous defense of his view that it is strictly forbidden to make a living out of the Torah and that none of the early Rabbis ever made such use of it. A scholar who happens to be poor, or afflicted and physically helpless, should of course be helped. It is, indeed, a duty of congregations to pay the levies and taxes on behalf of scholars (v. supra III, 5, and note). but that is because they are, in this respect, looked upon as Kohanim' (Aaronides) who were by Biblical law exempt from tithes, etc.
- (43) b. Halafta. 2nd century.
- (44) Honoring the Torah consists in zeal and alacrity in carrying out its precepts, in the proper and reverent care for books of, or appertaining to, the Torah, and in respectful bearing towards scholars (M.).
- (45) גופו lit., 'his body'. 'his person'. V. supra I, 17.
- (46) Some texts add 'his son'. II ARN, Ch. XXXIV, has R. Eliezer son of R. Eleazar ha'Kappar. R. had a reading. R. Eliezer, son of R. Jose.
- (47) Either, (a) a judge who refrains from imposing a judgment, and strives to induce parties to come to an agreement; or (b) any person who avoids entering into litigation, and seeks a friendly settlement of differences.
- (48) Which disappointed litigants might feel towards the judge, or towards the other side.
- (49) The virtual robbery which a judge might commit if, however honestly, he gave a decision in favor of the wrong party; or which might result when a party in the heat of dispute puts in an exaggerated claim or denial and succeeds therein.
- (50) The oath which a judge imposes, in accordance with the Torah, but which he may quite conceivably impose in error, though in good faith, on the wrong party (see L.); or, untrue statements which a litigant may, in the stress of the judicial proceedings, make under oath. The expression here used שבועת שוא (an oath taken in vain) differs, in its technical use, from שבועת שקר (a false oath), v. Shebu. 25b. Some (e.g., B.) think ש'שוא is used here not in the technical sense, but as synonymous with ש'שקר insists that ש'שקר is inapplicable here, and that ש'שוא is to be taken in its precise meaning.
- (51) I.e., he looks upon the judicial position as one that confers on him the opportunity for exercising authority, rather than one that demands self-effacing objectivity, involving infinite pains in the sifting of evidence (v.: supra I, 9), deliberate impartiality towards parties (v. I, 5), a deep and lifelong study of the Law, and patience in coming to a decision (v. I, 1), cf. infra VI, 6.
- (52) He is too sure of his own wisdom and Seest thou a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope of a fool than of him. (Prov. XXVI, 12.)
- (53) Because he is indifferent to the possible injustice that may result from his actions.
- (54) גס גס רוח = bulky, oversized, uncouth, gross. The same word with לב (heart) is translated 'over confident' earlier in the sentence.
- (55) The Jewish judiciary system provided for the Great Sanhedrin of seventy-one members, a Lesser Sanhedrin of twenty-three, and the smallest court of three laymen or of one accredited expert (מומחה Mumhe) in the Law. But even this expert, although permitted to 'sit' alone, is advised here not to take unnecessary advantage of the permission but, if at all possible, to obtain the assistance of (two) others (so M.).



(56) I.e., God.

(57) Either, 'they are free to concur, but not thou to force them to concur,' or, 'they are entitled to say to thee, accept our opinion' (as they are in the majority), but not thou (as you are only one against two).' Some point out that an 'expert' who has called in lay assistance might be tempted to force his opinion by over-emphasizing his own superior learning, or even by pointedly reminding his co-judges that he could, had he chosen, have 'sat' and decided alone, and that he had called them in only as a matter of grace. The proper procedure is that whilst the expert's voice prevails on a point of law, that of a majority of the court is decisive in matters dependent on 'the weighing of opinions' (שקול הדעת).

(58) b. Jose(ph) as in II ARN, Ch. XXXV (where the wording of the dictum differs). I ARN, Ch. XXX has, R. Nathan b. Joseph. A disciple of R. Akiba and R. Ishmael. Frankel, Parke ha-Mishnah, p. 155, says his name, like that of his colleague R. Joshiah, does not occur in Mishnah or Tosef. or Torath Kohanim. The inclusion of the name here is due to the fact that in Aboth are mentioned many Tannaim of the sixth generation whose names occur otherwise only in Baraitas, v. Oesterley, a.l.

(59) I.e., whilst he is in, etc. For a similar use of v. Deut. XXVIII, 47, מרב כל Lam. I, 3, מעני Others: 'by means of poverty', i.e., by sacrificing time he could use for improving his material lot, in order to study and practice the Torah. Others: 'despite poverty'.

(60) With which he will be rewarded.

(61) Though it enables him to devote more time to the study of the Torah, and increases his opportunities for observing its precepts. Or, because the thought and anxiety he expends on his possessions and concerns, occupy his mind to the exclusion of Torah.

(62) Which will be his punishment, and which might indeed make it impossible for him to devote himself to the Torah even if by that time he is desirous of making good his former omissions. For the latter half of the dictum cf. Deut. XXVIII, 47-8: Because thou didst not serve the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, by reason of the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemy whom the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things.

(63) The greatest of R. Akiba's disciples; deserved the name מאיר because 'he threw light' on the meaning of Scripture.

(64) Cf. supra II, 5, and infra VI, 5.

(65) Cf. Mishnah 4.

(66) Conditions conducive to idleness which will militate against your becoming learned in the Torah. Cf. the quotation from Megillath Hasidim in J. Ber., end, 'If thou forsakest it (the Torah) one day, it will forsake thee two days. 'a saying otherwise known from Sirach. V; also Sifre, Ekeb. ed. Friedmann, p.

84a. I ARN, Ch. XXIX: 'idlers (בטלנין) (such as robbers, thieves, lions, bears, etc.) against thee.' Others: 'idlers like thee'.

(67) Some texts 'He (God) has.'

(68) Cf. supra II, 14 and 16.

(69) Disciple and colleague of R. Akiba. There was an earlier scholar of the same name who lived towards the end of Temple times. V. Frankel, op. 'it., p. 76ff. Hyman Toledoth s.v.

(70) פקדליט Gr. \*\*.

(71) קטיגור Gr. \*\*.

(72) Lit., 'Return'.

(73) חריס some identify with the Greek \*\*= Gr. \*\* 'door', or its derivative Gr. \*\* 'an oblong shield'; others with Gr. \*\* breastplate. In both cases it would denote something that serves as a protection. V. fast. for an attempted Hebrew derivation.

(74) If transgressions have outnumbered fulfillments of precepts, then divine punishment can be averted by Repentance (in the case of a person about to die), and by (that together with) good deeds (in the case of one who lives on).

(75) One of the youngest of R. Akiba's disciples. His cognomen is said to be due either to his occupation as a sandal-maker, or to his having been a native of Alexandria. Another opinion is that he was a piercer of gems, called in Aramaic סנדלכון (which may be identical with the Greek \*\*).

(76) Or, for the 'sake of Heaven'. Lowe's MS. also some edd. of ARN (v. Schechter's ed. I ARN, Ch. XL, p. 129 note 23), 'In the name of duty (מצוה).'

(77) Frankel, op. cit., p. 187, suggests that R. Johanan had in mind the distinction between the Palestinian schools and the Alexandrian schools (known to him who had come from Alexandria). In the latter they followed the allegorical method of exegesis, which led to negative and even antinomian results. Hyman, Toledoth s.v. suggests that R. Johanan said this with reference to the assembly of Rabbis, in which he himself took part, in the Valley of Beth-Rimmon after the fall of Bethar, for the purpose of encouraging his colleagues who had met for a worthy purpose under conditions that were precarious and with prospects that were extremely unpromising.

(78) Some: Eliezer.

(79) In II ARN, Ch. XXXIV, p. 76, this dictum is in the name of R. Nathan. R. El. b. Shammua' was a disciple of R. Akiba.

(80) I ARN (Ch. XXVII, p. 84) and II ARN (Ch. XXXIV, p. 76) cite Ex. XVII, 9: Moses 'bracketed' himself with his disciple Joshua by saying, 'choose unto us men'. Lowe's MS. and an alternative in R. MV. Aruch (v. Baer, Siddur Abodath Israel, a. l.) have 'as the honor of thy colleague' which produces an apparently smoother sequence. R. Jonah has a composite reading כנבוד חברך which he tries to explain (v. Schechter, I ARN p. 85, n. 17).

- (81) *מורא* the same word is translated 'fear', in 'fear of Heaven'.
- (82) I ARN cites Num. XII, 11. Aaron said to Moses: 'I pray thee, my master.' Although Aaron was the elder brother, he acknowledged Moses as his master. II ARN cites Ex. VII, 2.
- (83) I ARN cites Num. XI, 28, where Joshua addresses Moses, 'My Lord Moses.' II ARN cites Ex. IV, 16, 'And thou (Moses, the Master) shalt be unto him (Aaron) in God's stead.'
- (84) b. II'a'i, a contemporary of R. Eleazar b. Shammua'. L.: This dictum is a complement to the foregoing and the advice is meant for the teacher.
- (85) In view of the foregoing note perhaps best render *למורד* as 'teaching'. Some texts have *למורד* but that too could have the meaning of 'teaching'.
- (86) If the error is due to carelessness; because one error leads to further errors, and is liable to result in breaches of the law not only on one's own part but on that of one's hearers or disciples.
- (87) b. Yohai, v. supra III, 4, and infra VI, 8, p. 87, n. 8.
- (88) Which one should try to attain; or, to which one should show deference.
- (89) Cf. Prov. I, 9: For they (instruction and teaching, *בורה*) shall be a chap let unto thy head.
- (90) Cf. Ex. XXIX, 6: And thou shalt set the miter upon his (Aaron's) head, and put the holy crown upon the miter.
- (91) For the verb *עלה* in this sense, cf. Prov. XXXI, 29.
- (92) Because without it the other crowns do not command deference. Cf. Eccl. VII, I; Prov. XXII, I.
- (93) Identified in this case with R. Eleazar b. 'Arach. V. supra II, 14 note.
- (94) B.: If there are no scholars in your own place. L.: Even if there are scholars in your own locality; the very experience of 'exile' — the strange surroundings, the privations it entails (cf. infra VI, 4) and the self-reliance it calls forth — is conducive to the better study of the Torah. The understanding of this passage in this sense has been the motive power of the deep-rooted custom among Jews, rife even in recent, and by no mean extinct in modern, times, of sending one's sons away from home to 'learn Torah'.
- (95) R. Eleazar b. 'Arach (v. p. 51, n. 14) had probably learnt this from personal experience, v. supra II, 14, n. 8.
- (96) The advantages of corporate study are frequently stressed. A companion in one's studies is not less important than a teacher (cf. supra I, 6).
- (97) Prov. III, 5. Some think that the stress intended is on the necessity for a teacher to give authoritative guidance to the student, and render 'and say not that it will come after thee or that thy equals (in learning) will help you to acquire a complete and sound knowledge; nor do thou lean on thine own understanding'.
- (98) Probably Jannai the father of R. Dosthai mentioned in III, 8; a contemporary of R. Meir.
- (99) Perhaps rather 'the secure feeling of' cf. Jer. XII, 1, Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are they all secure that deal very treacherously?
- (100) 'Even (*אף*)' The afflictions of the righteous might appear easier to account for, e.g., by alleging the man's righteousness may be a sham, and that he is being punished for hidden sins; even so we cannot know the real reason.
- (101) After the vocalization in I Chron. IX, 15. Others vocalize *Harash* v. Bacher AT. I, p. 380. R. Mathia (or Mattithiah) lived in Rome in the middle of the second century.
- (102) After II ARN, Ch. XXXIV *לשאויל בשלום* cf. I ARN, Ch. XXIX end, or, 'Be first with the (greeting of) Shalom ('Peace') to all men.' It is reported of R. Johanan b. Zakkai that never did anyone anticipate him in the salutation of Peace, not even a heathen in the market-place (Ber. 17a).
- (103) Frankel, op. cit., p. 238, suggests that this dictum was intended against the proverb, attributed to Julius Caesar, to the effect that it is better to be the first in a small village, than second in a large city. There is much in this suggestion, as the latter proverb is all very well for a mentality that idealizes temporal power, but not for those who recognize the supremacy of the spirit (cf. Zech. IV, 6). V. Bacher op. cit., p. 384. For a Rabbinic reversal of R. Mathia's advice: 'Be a head to foxes rather than a tail to lions,' v. J. San. IV, 10, p. 22b.
- (104) Probably R. J. b. Kurshai (or Kudshai), a tradent of R. Meir and of R. Simeon b. Yohai.
- (105) *פרוזדור* Gr. \*\* 'the space before the door', 'porch'.
- (106) With repentance and good deeds.
- (107) *טריקלין* Gr. \*\* A room with three couches for reclining at meals; among Romans, the triclinium was the dining room.
- (108) By means of which one wins one's way to the world to come.
- (109) When one's goal is attained. The energy and enthusiasm of the striving are more spiritually exhilarating than the final achievement.
- (110) The state of perfect and enduring balance, evenness and temperateness of spirit characteristic of the existence after death (cf. Eccl. IX, 10).
- (111) In which satisfaction is never complete, and joy never unalloyed. This world, whilst in the end not comparable to the world to come, has its compensations — the very striving in this world for the perfection that is possible only in the world to come, is something greater than the perfection itself, since the repentance and good deeds of this world can only be achieved by dint of conscious avoidance of evil, and of positive well-doing, the former

superfluous and the latter not requiring deliberate effort, in the world to come.

(112) b. Shammua' (v. Mish. 12). R. Simeon was a disciple of R. Meir.

(113) הרצה The Pi'el of רצה is once used in the Bible, Job XX, 10, as 'seek the favor of.' 'appease'.

(114) Your efforts are likely to be worse than useless.

(115) The Jewish custom is, therefore, not to offer condolence to mourners until after the interment of their dead.

(116) If one is closely questioned at the time he makes a vow, as to its precise scope, etc., he is liable-either through over-zeal or foolhardiness-to extend its scope and over-particularize its applicability, and thus undertake more than he intended, or impose upon himself uncalled for commitments or inhibitions; he is also likely to be led into expressing the vow in such terms as would make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for him ever to obtain release therefrom (as one can, in many cases, be released from a vow by a competent 'court'). V. I ARN, Ch. XXVI, R. Akiba said, be not free with vows.'

(117) Whether due to his own fault, or caused by others. He is liable to think that you are gloating over him (v. supra III, 11). The advice here is not that one should deliberately avoid seeing him, but that one should not seek opportunities for seeing him. Noticeable avoidance would be almost as undesirable.

(118) First century, called ha-Katan, the Small, on account of his humility, or (according to others) because he was less only than Samuel the Prophet. On his chronology, v. Herford, a.I.

(119) It may be that this dictum was placed here because it happens to illustrate and emphasize the advice immediately preceding. Even over an enemy one should not gloat, how much less over others. Bacher AT, I, p. 370, n. 8, cites a conjecture that דשמואל הקטן אמר is a mistaken amplification of the letters ש ה א which actually were the initial letters (ראשי תיבות) of the words 'הרי הכתוב אומר' 'even as Scripture says' introducing a Biblical authority for the last section of the foregoing sentence.

(120) Prov. XXIV, 17-18. Samuel ha-Katan did not adopt or advocate too pacific an attitude towards Israel's enemies; on the contrary, he played a leading part in the insertion into the daily 'Amidah Prayer of a special Blessing directed against Israel's external and (chiefly) internal enemies, the Minim. However, he quite conceivably felt that Israel by rejoicing at the fallings and stumblings of their enemies, and thus exhibiting an unworthy feeling, would incline God, who is ever on the side of the wronged, to favor their adversaries, not for the latter's merits but because of Israel's failings, and that thus would Israel, by their own fault, hold up their final and complete salvation from their enemies, for which he prayed. In the light of this consideration, the inclusion of verse 18, which

is omitted in some Aboth texts, is necessary as supplying the main point to Samuel's favorite quotation.

(121) Second century. A disciple of R. Meir. He became a great scholar, but having entered too deeply into esoteric speculation, he eventually apostasized from Judaism, probably to Gnosticism. Thereafter he was referred to as אחר 'another'. Abuyah אבוייה is the usual reading. Lowe's MS. Has אביה Abiyah, a name occurring in I Kings XIV, 1.

(122) הלומד ילד So all old texts except R. Jonah who has הלומד [תורה] לילד a reading adopted later by some. The reading followed here is borne out by I ARN, Ch. XXIV p. 77 and II ARN, Ch. XXXV, p. 88.

(123) Which is smooth and clean. נייר is derived by Jast. From נור 'to (be) clear,' i.e., a blank surface. Krauss derives from ניר 'warp', i.e., (originally) the fiber from which the writing material was prepared. In modern Hebrew, נייר is used for paper.

(124) I and II ARN. בזקנותו.

(125) The rough surface causes spluttering and 'running' of the ink, rendering legibility difficult, if not impossible.

(126) A contemporary of Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi, as evident from the end of this Mishnah.

(127) New and unmatured. One learning from the young can expect to obtain only immature knowledge.

(128) One who learns from the old gets the benefit of ripe knowledge and mature judgment.

(129) V. supra II, 1. The P.B. text has ר' מאיר which is incorrect (v. Baer, Siddur, 'Abodath Israel a.I.).

(130) קניקן fast. 'a cylindrical vessel let into the ground of the cellar, in general a wine- or oil-vessel'. 'Aruch Kohut suggests an Arabic derivation.

(131) Rabbi disputes R. Jose b. Judah's opinion. In Rabbi's experience, a man's age was by no means a reliable index to his learning.

(132) A contemporary of Rabbi and the teacher of the celebrated Aggadist R. Joshua b. Levi.

(133) קנאה Taylor rightly points out that the word is also used in a good sense, viz. 'emulation'.

(134) תאוה '(keen) desire', 'lust'.

(135) Any one of the undesirable characteristics mentioned have this effect, since they necessarily negate the religious teachings of the Torah, and render one unreceptive of the mental and moral excellences. (M.) For the phrase cf. supra II, 11.

(136) להחיות vocalize להחיות as a Nif'al. A polemic against those who denied resurrection (e.g. the Gnostics).

(137) M. and others, 'those living again (after their death)'.

(138) I.e., the living.

(139) I.e., to the end that, eventually, men might naturally and spontaneously, become aware that God is the creator, etc. Cf. Jer. XXXI, 34, prophesying of the 'days that come', and they shall teach no more

every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying: 'Know the Lord'; for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord. (cf. R; Jonah).

(140) V. next note.

(141) *הייצר* and *המבין* Cf. Ps. XXXIII, 15: He that fashioneth (*הייצר*) the hearts of them all, that considereth or discerneth (*המבין*) all their doings.

(142) Cf. Mal. III, 5: And I will come near to you in judgment, and I will be a swift witness.

(143) *בעל דין* the opposite party in a lawsuit. Cf. Job XXXI, 35.

(144) *עתידי* Oesterley. 'in the hereafter'. The sentence is, of course, so understood; but, grammatically. *עתידי* with the Infinitive (used in Mishnaic Hebrew to express the future tense) generally, as here, expresses the certainty and inevitability of that which, it is said, is to happen. When used with regard to human beings one can render 'destined' as in *supra* III, 1.

(145) Omitted in some versions. For the expression. v. *supra* III, 1, note. perhaps it is inserted here in view of the reference to God as Judge. Cf. *ברוך דין האמת*. Blessed be the righteous Judge' prescribed in Ber. IX, 1, to be said on hearing evil tidings, but capable, of course, of general application. Note 'in whom there is no unrighteousness' which immediately follows here.'

(146) Taken from II Chron. XIX, 7: For there is no iniquity (or, unrighteousness) with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of bribes. Cf. Deut. XXXII, 4; Ps. XCII, 16; 'nor forgetting' appears to have been added so as to declare every conceivable departure from justice as impossible with God; not only is He certain not to do an injustice deliberately, but even an unwitting miscarriage of justice through forgetting (either a man's good or evil deeds) cannot occur with Him. 'Nor taking of bribes'; M. says this must not be taken in the usual sense of the expression, because such a thing is positively unthinkable of God. What it means is that even if a man has a thousand good deeds to his credit to one evil one, the thousand do not 'influence' God to overlook the one. The latter must be expiated, while for the former there is reward.

(147) Apparently added by someone who took 'taking of bribes' in the ordinary sense. In view of M.'s interpretation (v. previous note) these words ('for all is His') are meaningless and superfluous.

(148) The account which a man must give of his life.

(149) V. *supra* II, 11.

(150) A polemic against the heretics who denied reward and punishment in the hereafter. V. p. 56, n. 4. Perhaps it is also intended as against the idea of suicide, which the Roman Stoics (e.g. Seneca) extolled as 'a way out'.

(151) The phrase is used mostly in the sense of 'against one's will'.

(152) This supports the suggestion in note 5 as to a possible polemic against suicide.

(153) V. p. 56, n. 12.

(154) V. *supra* III, 2.

## Avoth Chapter 5

**MISHNAH 1. WITH TEN [DIVINE] UTTERANCES<sup>1</sup> WAS THE WORLD CREATED.<sup>2</sup> AND WHAT IS THIS [SCRIPTURAL] INFORMATION [MEANT] TO TELL, FOR SURELY IT COULD HAVE BEEN CREATED WITH<sup>3</sup> ONE UTTERANCE? BUT IT IS THAT PENALTY MIGHT BE EXACTED FROM THE WICKED WHO DESTROY THE WORLD THAT WAS CREATED WITH TEN UTTERANCES,<sup>4</sup> AND TO GIVE A GOODLY REWARD TO THE RIGHTEOUS WHO MAINTAIN THE WORLD THAT WAS CREATED WITH TEN UTTERANCES.<sup>5</sup>**

**MISHNAH 2. [THERE WERE] TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH,<sup>6</sup> IN ORDER TO MAKE KNOWN HOW LONG-EXTENDED IS LONG-SUFFERING WITH HIM; FOR ALL THOSE GENERATIONS WERE REPEATEDLY ACTING PROVOKINGLY,<sup>7</sup> UNTIL HE BROUGHT UPON THEM THE WATERS OF THE FLOOD. [THERE WERE] TEN GENERATIONS FROM NOAH TO ABRAHAM,<sup>8</sup> IN ORDER TO MAKE KNOWN HOW LONG-EXTENDED IS LONG-SUFFERING WITH HIM; FOR ALL THOSE GENERATIONS WERE REPEATEDLY ACTING PROVOKINGLY, UNTIL ABRAHAM, OUR FATHER, CAME AND RECEIVED THE REWARD OF ALL OF THEM.<sup>9</sup>**

**MISHNAH 3. WITH TEN TRIALS WAS ABRAHAM, OUR FATHER, PROVED,<sup>10</sup> AND HE STOOD [FIRM]<sup>11</sup> IN THEM ALL; TO MAKE KNOWN HOW GREAT WAS THE LOVE OF ABRAHAM,<sup>12</sup> OUR FATHER (PEACE BE UPON HIM).**

**MISHNAH 4. TEN WONDERS WERE WROUGHT FOR OUR FATHERS IN EGYPT,<sup>13</sup> AND TEN AT THE [RED] SEA.<sup>14</sup> TEN PLAGUES DID THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, BRING**



UPON THE EGYPTIANS IN EGYPT AND TEN AT THE [RED] SEA.<sup>15</sup> [WITH] TEN TEMPTATIONS DID OUR FATHERS PUT TO PROOF THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE,<sup>16</sup> AS IT IS SAID, YET HAVE THEY PUT ME TO PROOF THESE TEN TIMES, AND HAVE NOT HEARKENED TO MY VOICE.<sup>17</sup>

**MISHNAH 5.** TEN WONDERS WERE WROUGHT FOR OUR FATHERS IN THE SANCTUARY: [i] NO WOMAN MISCARRIED FROM THE ODOUR OF THE HOLY [I.E.. SACRIFICIAL] FLESH;<sup>18</sup> [ii] THE HOLY FLESH NEVER BECAME PUTRID;<sup>19</sup> [iii] NO FLY WAS SEEN IN THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE;<sup>20</sup> [iv] NO PERSONAL UNCLEANNESS OCCURRED TO THE HIGH PRIEST ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT;<sup>21</sup> [v] THE RAINS DID NOT EXTINGUISH THE FIRE OF THE WOOD OF THE PILE;<sup>22</sup> [vi] THE WIND DID NOT PREVAIL AGAINST THE COLUMN OF SMOKE;<sup>23</sup> [vii] NO DISQUALIFICATION WAS FOUND IN THE OMER,<sup>24</sup> OR IN THE TWO LOAVES,<sup>25</sup> OR IN THE SHEWBREAD;<sup>26</sup> [viii] THEY STOOD SERRIED,<sup>27</sup> YET PROSTRATED THEMSELVES [WITH] WIDE SPACES [BETWEEN THEM]; [ix] NEVER DID A SERPENT OR A SCORPION DO INJURY IN JERUSALEM; [x] AND NO MAN SAID TO HIS FELLOW: THE PLACE IS TOO STRAIT FOR ME TO LODGE OVERNIGHT<sup>28</sup> IN JERUSALEM.

**MISHNAH 6.** TEN THINGS WERE CREATED ON THE EVE OF THE SABBATH<sup>29</sup> AT TWILIGHT, AND THESE ARE THEY: [i] THE MOUTH OF THE EARTH,<sup>30</sup> [ii] THE MOUTH OF THE WELL,<sup>31</sup> [iii] THE MOUTH OF THE SHE-ASS,<sup>32</sup> [iv] THE RAINBOW,<sup>33</sup> [v] THE MANNA, [vi] THE ROD [OF MOSES],<sup>34</sup> [vii] THE SHAMIR,<sup>35</sup> [viii] THE TEXT,<sup>36</sup> [ix] THE WRITING,<sup>37</sup> AND [x] THE TABLES.<sup>38</sup> AND SOME SAY: ALSO THE SEPULCHRE OF MOSES, OUR TEACHER,<sup>39</sup> AND THE RAM OF ABRAHAM, OUR FATHER,<sup>40</sup> AND SOME SAY: ALSO THE DESTROYING [SPIRITS],<sup>41</sup> AND TONGS TOO, MADE WITH TONGS.<sup>42</sup>

**MISHNAH 7.** [THERE ARE] SEVEN THINGS [CHARACTERISTIC] IN A MAN OF IMPERFECTLY DEVELOPED MIND,<sup>43</sup> AND SEVEN IN A WISE MAN: A WISE MAN SPEAKS NOT BEFORE ONE WHO IS GREATER THAN HE IN WISDOM,<sup>44</sup> AND ENTERS NOT INTO<sup>45</sup> THE MIDST OF THE WORDS OF HIS FELLOW; AND IS NOT HASTY TO ANSWER;<sup>46</sup> HE ASKS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUBJECT-MATTER,<sup>47</sup> AND HE ANSWERS<sup>48</sup> IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCEPTED DECISION;<sup>49</sup> AND HE SPEAKS OF THE FIRST [POINT] FIRST, AND OF THE LAST [POINT] LAST; AND CONCERNING THAT WHICH HE HAS NOT HEARD, HE SAYS:<sup>45</sup> HAVE NOT HEARD;<sup>50</sup> AND HE ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRUTH.<sup>51</sup> AND THE REVERSE OF THESE [ARE CHARACTERISTIC] IN A MAN OF IMPERFECTLY DEVELOPED MIND.

**MISHNAH 8.** SEVEN KINDS OF PUNISHMENT COME TO THE WORLD<sup>52</sup> FOR SEVEN CATEGORIES OF TRANSGRESSION:<sup>53</sup> WHEN SOME OF THEM [I. E., THE PEOPLE] GIVE TITHES, AND OTHERS DO NOT GIVE TITHES, A FAMINE FROM DROUGHT<sup>54</sup> COMES, AND SOME GO HUNGRY, AND OTHERS HAVE PLENTY; WHEN THEY HAVE ALL DECIDED NOT TO GIVE TITHES, A FAMINE FROM TUMULT<sup>55</sup> COMES; [WHEN THEY HAVE, IN ADDITION, DECIDED] NOT TO SET APART THE DOUGH[-CAKE],<sup>56</sup> A FAMINE OF EXTERMINATION COMES. PESTILENCE COMES TO THE WORLD<sup>57</sup> FOR [SINS] THE DEATH-PENALTIES [FOR] WHICH ARE PRONOUNCED IN THE TORAH, BUT WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN REFERRED TO A [HUMAN] TRIBUNAL;<sup>58</sup> AND ON ACCOUNT OF [THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAWS REGARDING] THE PRODUCE OF THE SEVENTH YEAR.<sup>59</sup> THE SWORD COMES TO THE WORLD<sup>60</sup> FOR THE RETARDATION OF JUDGMENT,<sup>61</sup> AND FOR THE PERVERSION OF JUDGMENT, AND ON ACCOUNT OF THOSE WHO INTERPRET THE TORAH NOT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCEPTED LAW.<sup>62</sup>

# OVOS

**MISHNAH 9.** WILD BEASTS COME TO THE WORLD<sup>63</sup> FOR VAIN SWEARING,<sup>64</sup> AND FOR THE PROFANATION OF THE NAME.<sup>65</sup> EXILE COMES TO THE WORLD<sup>66</sup> FOR IDOLATRY, FOR INCEST AND FOR BLOODSHED,<sup>67</sup> AND FOR [TRANSGRESSING THE COMMANDMENT OF] THE [YEAR OF THE] RELEASE OF THE LAND.<sup>68</sup> AT FOUR PERIODS PESTILENCE INCREASES: IN THE FOURTH [YEAR], IN THE SEVENTH [YEAR] AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF<sup>69</sup> THE SEVENTH [YEAR], AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FEAST [OF TABERNACLES]<sup>70</sup> IN EVERY YEAR. IN THE FOURTH [YEAR], ON ACCOUNT OF [DEFAULTING WITH] THE TITHE OF THE POOR WHICH IS [DUE] IN THE THIRD [YEAR];<sup>71</sup> IN THE SEVENTH [YEAR], ON ACCOUNT OF [DEFAULTING] WITH THE TITHE OF THE POOR WHICH IS [DUE] IN THE SIXTH [YEAR]; AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SEVENTH [YEAR], ON ACCOUNT OF [TRANSGRESSING THE LAWS REGARDING] THE PRODUCE OF THE SEVENTH [YEAR];<sup>72</sup> AND AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FEAST [OF TABERNACLES] IN EVERY YEAR, FOR ROBBING THE GIFTS [ASSIGNED BY THE TORAH] TO THE POOR.<sup>73</sup>

**MISHNAH 10.** [THERE ARE] FOUR TYPES OF CHARACTER<sup>74</sup> IN MEN: HE THAT SAYS: 'MINE IS MINE, AND THINE IS THINE': THIS IS A NEUTRAL TYPE SOME SAY THIS IS A SODOM-TYPE<sup>75</sup> OF CHARACTER: [HE THAT SAYS:] 'MINE IS THINE AND THINE IS MINE' IS AN UNLEARNED PERSON;<sup>76</sup> [HE THAT SAYS:] 'MINE IS THINE AND THINE IS THINE,' IS A PIOUS MAN;<sup>77</sup> [HE THAT SAYS:] 'MINE IS MINE, AND THINE IS MINE,' IS A WICKED MAN.<sup>78</sup>

**MISHNAH 11.** [THERE ARE] FOUR TYPES OF CHARACTER IN [RESPECT OF] TEMPERAMENTS: EASY TO BECOME ANGRY, AND EASY TO BE PACIFIED: HIS GAIN DISAPPEARS IN HIS LOSS;<sup>79</sup> HARD TO BECOME ANGRY, AND HARD TO BE

PACIFIED: HIS LOSS DISAPPEARS IN HIS GAIN; HARD TO BECOME ANGRY AND EASY TO BE PACIFIED: [HE IS] A PIOUS MAN;<sup>80</sup> EASY TO BECOME ANGRY AND HARD TO BE PACIFIED: [HE IS] A WICKED MAN.

**MISHNAH 12.** [THERE ARE] FOUR TYPES OF CHARACTER AMONG DISCIPLES: QUICK TO COMPREHEND,<sup>81</sup> AND QUICK TO FORGET:<sup>82</sup> HIS GAIN DISAPPEARS IN HIS LOSS; SLOW TO COMPREHEND, AND SLOW TO FORGET: HIS LOSS DISAPPEARS IN HIS GAIN: QUICK TO COMPREHEND, AND SLOW TO FORGET: [HE IS] A WISE MAN;<sup>83</sup> SLOW TO COMPREHEND, AND QUICK TO FORGET, THIS IS AN EVIL PORTION.<sup>84</sup>

**MISHNAH 13.** [THERE ARE] FOUR TYPES OF CHARACTER IN [RESPECT OF] ALMSGIVING.<sup>85</sup> HE WHO DESIRES THAT HE [HIMSELF] SHOULD GIVE, BUT THAT OTHERS SHOULD NOT GIVE: HIS EYE IS EVIL<sup>86</sup> TOWARDS THAT WHICH APPERTAINS TO OTHERS;<sup>87</sup> [HE WHO DESIRES] THAT OTHERS SHOULD GIVE, BUT THAT HE [HIMSELF] SHOULD NOT GIVE: HIS EYE IS EVIL TOWARDS THAT WHICH IS HIS [OWN]; [HE WHO DESIRES] THAT HE [HIMSELF] SHOULD GIVE, AND THAT OTHERS SHOULD GIVE: [HE IS] A PIOUS MAN; [HE WHO DESIRES] THAT HE HIMSELF SHOULD NOT GIVE AND THAT OTHERS [TOO] SHOULD NOT GIVE: [HE IS] A WICKED MAN.<sup>88</sup>

**MISHNAH 14.** [THERE ARE] FOUR TYPES OF CHARACTER IN [REGARD TO REGULAR] ATTENDANCE<sup>89</sup> AT THE HOUSE-OF-STUDY: HE WHO ATTENDS BUT PRACTICES<sup>90</sup> NOT, THE REWARD FOR ATTENDING IS IN HIS HAND;<sup>91</sup> HE WHO PRACTICES BUT ATTENDS NOT,<sup>92</sup> THE REWARD FOR PRACTICING IS IN HIS HAND; HE WHO ATTENDS AND PRACTICES, HE IS A PIOUS MAN;<sup>93</sup> HE WHO ATTENDS NOT AND PRACTICES NOT: HE IS A WICKED MAN.<sup>94</sup>

# OVOS

**MISHNAH 15.** [THERE ARE] FOUR TYPES OF CHARACTER AMONG THOSE WHO SIT BEFORE THE SAGES:<sup>95</sup> [THEY ARE, SEVERALLY, TYPIFIED BY] A SPONGE, A FUNNEL, A STRAINER AND A SIEVE:<sup>96</sup> A SPONGE, WHICH ABSORBS ALL; A FUNNEL, WHICH LETS IN AT ONE END AND LETS OUT AT THE OTHER; A STRAINER, WHICH LETS OUT THE WINE AND RETAINS THE LEES; A SIEVE, WHICH LETS OUT THE COARSE MEAL AND RETAINS THE CHOICE FLOUR.<sup>97</sup>

**MISHNAH 16.** ALL LOVE THAT DEPENDS ON A [TRANSIENT] THING,<sup>98</sup> [WHEN THE] THING CEASES, [THE] LOVE CEASES; AND [ALL LOVE] THAT DEPENDS NOT ON A [TRANSIENT] THING, CEASES NOT FOR EVER. WHICH IS THE [KIND OF] LOVE THAT DEPENDS ON A [TRANSIENT] THING? SUCH AS WAS THE LOVE OF AMNON FOR TAMAR;<sup>99</sup> AND [WHICH IS THE KIND OF LOVE] THAT DEPENDS NOT ON A [TRANSIENT] THING? SUCH AS WAS THE LOVE OF DAVID AND JONATHAN.<sup>100</sup>

**MISHNAH 17.** EVERY CONTROVERSY THAT IS IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN,<sup>101</sup> THE END THEREOF IS [DESTINED] TO RESULT IN SOMETHING PERMANENT;<sup>102</sup> BUT ONE THAT IS NOT IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN, THE END THEREOF IS NOT [DESTINED] TO RESULT IN SOMETHING PERMANENT. WHICH IS THE [KIND OF] CONTROVERSY THAT IS IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN? SUCH AS WAS THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN HILLEL AND SHAMMAI;<sup>103</sup> AND WHICH IS THE [KIND OF] CONTROVERSY THAT IS NOT IN THE NAME OF HEAVEN? SUCH AS WAS THE CONTROVERSY OF KORAH AND ALL HIS CONGREGATION.<sup>104</sup>

**MISHNAH 18.** WHOEVER CAUSES THE MANY<sup>105</sup> TO BE RIGHTEOUS,<sup>106</sup> SIN OCCURS NOT THROUGH HIM;<sup>107</sup> AND WHOEVER CAUSES THE MANY TO SIN, THEY DO NOT AFFORD HIM THE FACULTY<sup>108</sup> TO REPENT.<sup>109</sup> MOSES WAS RIGHTEOUS AND CAUSED THE MANY TO BE RIGHTEOUS,

[THEREFORE] THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE MANY WAS [CONSIDERED] DEPENDENT ON HIM,<sup>110</sup> AS IT IS SAID, HE EXECUTED THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LORD AND HIS ORDINANCES WITH ISRAEL.<sup>111</sup> JEROBOAM, THE SON OF NEBAT, SINNED AND CAUSED OTHERS TO SIN, [THEREFORE] THE SIN OF THE MANY WAS [CONSIDERED] DEPENDENT ON HIM, AS IT IS SAID, FOR THE SINS OF JEROBOAM WHICH HE SINNED, AND WHEREWITH HE MADE ISRAEL TO SIN.<sup>112</sup>

**MISHNAH 19.** WHOEVER POSSESSES THESE THREE THINGS, HE IS OF THE DISCIPLES OF ABRAHAM, OUR FATHER; AND [WHOEVER POSSESSES] THREE OTHER THINGS, HE IS OF THE DISCIPLES OF BALAAM, THE WICKED.<sup>113</sup> THE DISCIPLES OF ABRAHAM, OUR FATHER, [POSSESS] A GOOD EYE,<sup>114</sup> AN HUMBLE SPIRIT<sup>115</sup> AND A LOWLY SOUL.<sup>116</sup> THE DISCIPLES OF BALAAM, THE WICKED, [POSSESS] AN EVIL EYE,<sup>117</sup> A HAUGHTY SPIRIT<sup>118</sup> AND AN OVER-AMBITIOUS SOUL.<sup>119</sup> WHAT IS [THE DIFFERENCE] BETWEEN THE DISCIPLES OF ABRAHAM, OUR FATHER, AND THE DISCIPLES OF BALAAM, THE WICKED. THE DISCIPLES OF ABRAHAM, OUR FATHER, ENJOY<sup>120</sup> [THEIR SHARE] IN THIS WORLD, AND INHERIT THE WORLD TO COME, AS IT IS SAID: THAT I MAY CAUSE THOSE THAT LOVE ME<sup>121</sup> TO INHERIT SUBSTANCE AND THAT I MAY FILL THEIR TREASURIES,<sup>122</sup> BUT THE DISCIPLES OF BALAAM, THE WICKED, INHERIT GEHINNOM,<sup>123</sup> AND DESCEND INTO THE NETHERMOST PIT, AS IT IS SAID: BUT THOU, O GOD, WILT BRING THEM DOWN TO THE NETHERMOST PIT; MEN OF BLOOD AND DECEIT<sup>124</sup> SHALL NOT LIVE OUT HALF THEIR DAYS; BUT AS FOR ME, I WILL TRUST IN THEE.

**MISHNAH 20.** JUDAH B. TEMA<sup>125</sup> SAID: BE BOLD AS A LEOPARD,<sup>126</sup> AND SWIFT AS AN EAGLE,<sup>127</sup> AND FLEET AS A HART,<sup>128</sup> AND STRONG AS A LION,<sup>129</sup> TO DO THE WILL OF THY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN.<sup>130</sup> HE USED TO SAY: THE BOLD-FACED<sup>131</sup> IS

[DESTINED] FOR GEHINNOM<sup>132</sup> AND THE SHAME-FACED<sup>133</sup> FOR THE GARDEN OF EDEN.<sup>134</sup> MAY IT BE THE WILL [EMANATING] FROM THY PRESENCE, O LORD OUR GOD,<sup>135</sup> THAT THY CITY<sup>136</sup> BE [RE]BUILT SPEEDILY IN OUR DAYS AND GRANT THOU [THAT] OUR PORTION [BE]<sup>137</sup> IN THY LAW.<sup>138</sup>

**MISHNAH 21.** HE USED TO SAY:<sup>139</sup> FIVE YEARS [IS THE AGE] FOR [THE STUDY OF] SCRIPTURE,<sup>140</sup> TEN-FOR [THE STUDY OF] MISHNAH,<sup>141</sup> THIRTEEN-FOR [BECOMING SUBJECT TO] COMMANDMENTS,<sup>142</sup> FIFTEEN-FOR [THE STUDY OF] TALMUD,<sup>143</sup> EIGHTEEN- FOR THE [BRIDAL] CANOPY,<sup>144</sup> TWENTY — FOR PURSUING,<sup>145</sup> THIRTY-FOR [FULL] STRENGTH,<sup>146</sup> FORTY — FOR UNDERSTANDING, FIFTY- FOR [ABILITY TO GIVE] COUNSEL,<sup>147</sup> SIXTY-FOR MATURE AGE, SEVENTY-FOR A HOARY HEAD,<sup>148</sup> EIGHTY [IS A SIGN OF SUPERADDED] STRENGTH,<sup>149</sup> NINETY [IS THE AGE] FOR [A] BENDING [FIGURE],<sup>150</sup> AT A HUNDRED, ONE IS AS ONE THAT IS DEAD, HAVING PASSED AND CEASED FROM THE WORLD.<sup>151</sup>

**MISHNAH 22,**<sup>152</sup> BEN BAG BAG<sup>153</sup> SAID: TURN IT<sup>154</sup> OVER, AND [AGAIN] TURN IT OVER, FOR ALL IS THEREIN.<sup>155</sup> AND LOOK<sup>156</sup> INTO IT; AND BECOME GREY AND OLD THEREIN;<sup>157</sup> NEITHER MOVE THOU AWAY THEREFROM,<sup>158</sup> FOR THAN IT THOU HAST NO BETTER STANDARD OF CONDUCT.<sup>159</sup>

**MISHNAH 23.** BEN HEHE<sup>160</sup> SAID: ACCORDING TO THE LABOR IS THE REWARD.<sup>161</sup>

(1) ויאמר אלה' with reference to the phrase 'and God said', which, in Gen. I, introduces the several phases of creation, and to the original utterance which brought the universe as a comprehensive whole into being, as implied in Ps. XXXIII, 9, for he spoke, and it was.

(2) In Gen. I, 3-29. 'and God said' occurs nine times ( ויאמר in v. 28b is looked upon as introducing a command or a blessing and not some new act of creation. V. Elijah Wilna's commentary to Aboth). As to which is the tenth 'utterance', opinions differ.

Some think in view of Ps. XXXIII, 6, By the word of the Lord were the heavens wade, that an 'utterance' is implied in Gen. I, 1. P.R.E. ch. III designates 'and he said' in Gen. II, 18 (introducing the creation of woman) as the tenth. (The Epstein MS. of P.R.E. speaks of the ten utterances but does not enumerate them. V. G. Friedlander's Edition, a.i.) V. also II ARN ch. XXXVI, where one authority is reported as substituting Gen. I, 22, (the creation of the sea-monsters) where there is no 'and he said' but 'and he created' which term is held to imply a separate act of creation and therefore to have involved a separate 'utterance'. Gen. R. ch. XXVII enumerates eight times ויאמר up to Gen. I, 26, and in addition Gen. I, 1. (בראשית) and I, 2 'and the breath of God hovered over the face of the waters,' cf. the use of רוח breath in Ps. XXXIII, 6, as a parallel to word.

(3) מדה למוד לומר v. supra III, 8, note.

(4) If the world had been created by one single fiat, men, judging by the little they can themselves achieve by one act only, would think lightly of the world, and have little compunction about 'spoiling' a 'cheap' thing that can be so easily made. The fact that God took, as it were, extraordinary and, in view of his omnipotence, apparently unnecessary pains in its creation, should serve to warn would-be wicked men — potential destroyers of the world — that God will by no means allow anyone to go scot free who by his conduct tends to destroy the world in the creation of which He has taken so much trouble, as it were.

(5) 'The implied relationship between ethical and cosmic processes' (Oesterley) is an important factor in Jewish theology.

(6) Viz., (i) Adam; (ii) Seth; (iii) Enosh; (iv) Kenan; (v) Mahalaleel; (vi) Jered; (vii) Enoch; (viii) Methuselah; (ix) Lamech; (x) Noah; (Gen. V. 3-29).

(7) מכעיסין ובאין so also I ARN ch. XXXII, but in the parallel to the latter half of this Mishnah (ibid Ch. XXXIII) מכעיסין לפניו 'acting provokingly before Him' which Lowe's MS., MV., R. Jonah and others have in both instances.

(8) Viz., (i) Shem; (ii) Arpachshad; (iii) Shelah; (iv) Eber; (v) Peleg; (vi) Reu; (vii) Serug; (viii) Nahor; (ix) Terah; (x) Abraham; (Gen. XI, 10-26).

(9) I.e., the reward which had been in store for the people of those ten generations and would have been given them had they not by their wickedness angered God and forfeited their share.

(10) I ARN Ch. XXXIII amplifies: Two trials at the time he was bidden to leave Haran, two with his two sons, two with his two wives, one in the wars of the Kings, one at the covenant 'between the pieces' (Gen. XV). one in Ur of the Chaldees (where, according to a tradition, he had been thrown into a furnace whence he came out unharmed). II ARN Ch. XXXVI speaks of ten trials, but names only nine: (i) at Ur; (ii) Get thee out of thy land. (Gen. XII, 2); (iii) The famine when he left Haran (Ibid. v. 10); (iv) Sarah at



Pharaoh's palace; (v) Sarah at Abimelech's; (vi) Circumcision; (vii) The covenant 'between the pieces'; (viii) With Isaac; (ix) With Ishmael. p.R.E. contains numbers II,III (the latter as two separate trials), IV, VI-IX of the above list and adds his hiding underground from Nimrod for thirteen years, and the wars of the Kings (including the plight of Lot).

(11) I ARN, 'he was found perfect'.

(12) Cf. Isa. XLI, 8, Abraham that loved Me; II Chron. XX, 7, Abraham that loved Thee.

(13) That the ten plagues did not harm the Israelites is looked upon as constituting ten miracles.

(14) These ten are enumerated in I ARN ch. XXXIII (ed. Schechter, p. 96). Mekilta, Beshallah (ed. Weiss, p. 36). Tanhuma ib. (but not in ed. Buber), M. to Aboth summarizes: (i) the Sea cleft (Ex. XIV, 21); (ii) An arched tunnel ('tube') was formed through the water (Hab. III, 15); (iii) The sea-bed became hard (Ex. XIV, 29); (iv) it turned back to its muddy and clogging condition when the Egyptians attempted to use it (Hab. III, 14); (v) Separate paths were formed for each of the twelve tribes (Ps. CXXXVI, 13); (vi) The water congealed and hardened (Ps. LXXIV, 13); (vii) However not as one whole mass, but in separate blocks (ibid. Thou didst break the sea in pieces); (viii) The water-partitions between the parallel paths of the tribes were translucent (Ps. XVIII 12, 13); (ix) From the congealed (and salty) sea water, 'sweet' water flowed for the Israelites to drink, but (x) that which they did not drink, congealed again in its flow before it reached the ground (Ex. XV, 8).

(15) This paragraph not in all versions. The ten at the Red Sea are implied in the following expressions in Ex. XV: (i) v. 1, .hath he thrown; (ii) v. 4, hath he cast; (iii) ib. are sunk; (iv) v. 5, The deeps cover them; (v) ib. They went down into the depths; (vi) v. 6, dasheth in pieces the enemy; (vii) v. 7. Thou overthrowest those that rise up against Thee; (viii) ib. it consumeth them as stubble; (ix) v. 10, The sea covereth them; (x) ib. They sank as lead. M., basing himself on Mekilta, has one variation.

(16) In some edd. of ARN (ch. XXXIV) 'with ten trials did the Holy One, blessed be He, put Israel to proof and in all of them they were found not perfect'. A list of the ten is given in 'Ar. 15a, b. (i) Because there are no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? (Ex. XIV, 11); (ii) Not till they had seen the Egyptians washed up dead, did the Israelites believe (ib. 30-31); (iii) At Marah (Ex. XV, 24); (iv) At Rephidim (ib. XVII, 2 ff); (v) Gathering manna on the Sabbath (ib. XVI, 27); (vi) Leaving it till the morning (ib. 20); (vii) The first lust for flesh which was satisfied by the quails that came with the Manna (ib. 3, 12-13); (viii) The second lust for flesh followed by a surfeit of quails at Kibroth ha-Ta'avah (Num. XI, 4. 18-20,34); (ix) The Golden calf (which was not only a transgression of the prohibition against idols, but a sign of lack of faith); (x) The evil

report of the ten spies 'accepted' by the people. M. varies some items of the above list: for (v) he gives the murmuring which preceded the Manna (Ex. XVI, 2, 3), and for (vii) the murmuring at Taberah (Num. XI, 1,3). For the latter as well as for (iv) and (viii) cf. Deut. IX, 22, And at Taberah, and at Massah and at Kibroth ha-Ta'avah ye wade the Lord wroth.

(17) Num. XIV, 22. This also exemplifies God's long-suffering: hitherto the punishments for each act due to lack of faith had been ad hoc; it was only after the tenth 'trial', that God finally doomed that generation to perish in the wilderness.

(18) Through a longing that could not have been satisfied to partake of it, (but v. L.).

(19) Though it could be, and often was, kept at the altar-head for two or three days. R. Jonah and MV had התליע a denominative of חוליעה worm'.

(20) It was fitted with marble tables.

(21) Which would not only disqualify him from carrying through the service of the Day, but would make him feel exceedingly self-conscious, as everybody would be bound to get to know of it. I ARM Ch. XXXV adds, 'except R. Ishmael b. Kimhith' who was accidentally rendered unclean through the uncleanness of another person (v. Yoma 47a). In the case of another High priest who is reported to have become unclean on the Day of Atonement (ib. 12b), it is held by some authorities that that, too, was caused by an external impurity. Others say this miracle operated only in the First Temple, whereas the cases mentioned occurred in the Second.

(22) Laid on the altar, which was under the open sky. The Hebrew word translated 'pile' (מערכה) is from the root ערך to set (or lay) in order' which is used for laying a fire on an altar (e.g.. Gen. XXII, 9; Lev. I, 7,12).

(23) Some: A column of smoke from the altar-fire broken up or deflected by wind denoted an unacceptable sacrifice. L. explains quite prosaically: so that the smoke was not blown downward, thus causing discomfort to the priests in the performance of the service. L. is probably right as the first interpretation does not tally with the fact known from the Prophets., etc. that there had been sacrifices offered up in the Temple that were unacceptable to God.

(24) Lev. XXIII, 9ff. A sheaf of new barley freshly cut during the night following the First Day of Passover, brought to the Temple courtyard, threshed, parched, spread on the courtyard floor to be dried by the wind, milled, sifted through thirteen sieves, a tenth part of an Ephah taken off and given to the priests who offered it up in the manner prescribed for meal-offerings (Men. X, 3-5). This 'released' the new grain for reaping (ib. 7). Should some disqualifying defect have rendered the Omer unfit for the altar, it would

have been impossible to prepare another sheaf in time for the offering (v. B.).

(25) Baked of the 'First Fruits' of the wheat-harvest and offered up on the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) (Lev. *ibid.* 15ff.). The baking had to be done before the commencement of the festival, and was not among those Temple ritual occupations which overrode the prohibition of work on Sabbath and Festival. If, therefore, by reason of any defect, the Two Loaves would have had to be disqualified, others could not have been 'brought'.

(26) Ex. XXV, 30; Lev. XXIV, 5-7. It was changed weekly, on the Sabbath, but had to be baked before the Sabbath. If there had been some disqualifying cause, they could not have changed the showbread for another week. The last three miracles are treated in our Mishnah as one, but they are enumerated as separate in Yoma 21a, where the rain and wind miracles are not given among the ten.

(27) Or 'pressed together'.

(28) אדורין another reading is אדור 'dwell' and, according to some, it means that everybody who lived in Jerusalem was able to obtain a livelihood. Our reading refers to the large number of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem for the Three Festivals (Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles). all of whom found accommodation in Jerusalem.

(29) בין השמשות Nahmanides to Ex. XII, 6, on בין הערבים (which Onkelos translates בין שמישיא and Targum Jonathan ביי שמשמתא) renders it 'between the suns', between the sun in the East and the sun in the West: till midday the sun is in the East, after that in the West. At midday it shines in both directions (which explains the dual form of צהרים noon). After noon the sun's light gradually diminishes as from both directions (hence the dual צהרים) until it sinks. The Rabbinic phrase ביני שמשות would thus mean the period between the sun leaving the East and the sun leaving also the West. According to Ibn Ezra (v. Ex. *ib.* and Gen. I, 18) בין השמשות (or בין הערבים) would mean the period between the disappearance of the sun's disc beneath the horizon and the disappearance of its light which is still reflected in the clouds. Jastrow s.v. 'between the services' sc. of day and night, relying on Nahmanides' interpretation of למשלה היום not as 'to rule by day' but as 'to rule over the day, etc.' According to this interpretation, the day and the night are the servants of the sun and the moon, and the durations of day and night may be termed their respective periods of service. Ibn Ezra says of בין הערבים that it is מלה קשה 'a difficult term', which applies similarly, of course, to שמישיא.

(30) Num. XVI, 30, And if the Lord shall (be found to) have created a (special) creation and the ground open her mouth, and swallow them (i.e. Korah and his confederates) up, with all that appertain unto them.

(31) פי הבאר Either the mouth of the well in the rock which Moses opened by striking the rock (Num. XX, 7-11), or the mouth of the Well of Miriam which followed the Israelites in the wilderness and which halted when they encamped, and which is taken by some to be the well referred to in Num. XXI, 16-18.

(32) V. Num. XXII, 28, And the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam

(33) V. Gen. IX, 13ff.

(34) V. Ex. IV, 17.

(35) שמיר In Bibl. Heb. thorn, also flint used for engraving. In Rabbinic literature it also denotes a legendary worm or insect which by passing over stones could make an incision for an engraving or split them through completely. Such an assumption was deemed necessary in view of the command that no iron tool be lifted at the building of an altar to God (Ex. XX, 22) and, of the report in I Kings VI, 7, that in fact no such tool was heard during the building of Solomon's Temple.

(36) So M. and R. Jonah. And the Lord said unto Moses: Come up to Me into the mount, and be there; and I will give thee the tables of stone, and the law and the commandment which I have written.— (Ex. XXIV, 12.) i.e., God had already once written the Law before he called Moses into the mount. B. and others, 'the shape of the written characters' on the Tables which were held to have been of an unique nature in that the letters having been cut right through the stone, were not only equally readable on both sides, but a letter such as the ancient 'Ayin which was O-shaped-could, in such circumstances, have been possible only by miracle (v. Shab. 104a). This belief was based on Ex. XXXII, 15: tables that were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.

(37) מכתב Ex. XXXII, 16, and the writing (מכתב) was the writing of God. Others (e.g. Rashi) vocalize, here in the Mishnah, מכתב or מכתב the writing or engraving instrument.

(38) *Ibid.* And the tables were the work of God.

(39) Deut. XXXIV, 6.

(40) I.e., It was ordained on the eve of the First Sabbath at twilight that a certain ram in Abraham's time should be 'ownerless' (Hefker), so that when Abraham should require one as a surprise-substitute for Isaac, he might find one ready at hand which he could rightfully (i.e., without robbing anyone) appropriate for a sacrifice (L.).

(41) מזיקין from root נזק suffer injury, Est. VII, 4 (also Dan, VI, 3; Ezra IV, 13, 15, 22, Aramaic) i.e. those who cause injury, do harm, destroy. Demons. Souls unfinished before the First Sabbath set in.

(42) The idea is: There must have been tongs to hold the iron from which the first man-made tongs were forged. V. Pes. 54a, where it is suggested that the first tongs could have been cast in a mould. The parallels mention some other Sabbath-eve creations such as

the rod of Aaron (Num. XVII, 16 ff), the garment of Adam (Gen. III, 21), the cave in which Moses and Elijah stood when God revealed himself to them. (Ex. XXXIII, 22; I Kings XIX, 9 ff.) With reference to the things enumerated in the Mishnah, Singer (P.B. p. 200) remarks: 'All phenomena that seemed to partake at once of the natural and the supernatural were conceived as having had their origin in the interval between the close of the work of creation and the commencement of the Sabbath.' It is generally held that what is meant is that these things were created on the Sabbath eve at twilight, in posse, to become available in esse when the right time for their use would arrive.

(43) גלם in Ps. CXXXIX, 16, means the yet undeveloped embryo. Its use here as an antithesis to נפש proves that it has reference to a man's mental powers.

(44) Some versions add וּבְמִנְיָן 'and in number' which means either in number of years, i.e., age, or in the number of scholars who agree with the opinion of the other man, if they be in the majority.

(45) I.e., does not break in or interrupt.

(46) Cf. the advice in I,1. patience is required of a Rabbi, teacher or judge in giving a considered reply.

(47) Cf. Shab. 3b: R. Hiyya said to Rab: 'When Rabbi is definitely occupied with one tractate, do not ask him a question relating to another were it not that Rabbi is a great man (scholar) you would have confounded him and he would have given you an inappropriate reply.'

(48) B and (consequently) the teacher answers, etc.

(49) Others: 'to the point'.

(50) I.e., learnt it. He admits not knowing. Cf. Ber. 4a. DEZ ch. III, 'teach thy tongue to say I know not Others: When he gives an answer, either an interpretation or a decision, which has not been handed down to him by his own teachers, he deliberately makes a clear statement to that effect, so that his hearers might not be misled into taking for granted that this teaching of his too is from tradition. Some render 'understood' instead of 'heard'.

(51) R. Jonah: When in discussion he recognizes as true the solution propounded by another man, he acknowledges it as correct, though he may think of clever counter-arguments, and he does not consider it inconsistent with his dignity to admit defeat.

(52) I.e., upon mankind, more particularly upon Israel.

(53) Cf. MV. Others (e.g. Singer, P.B.), 'important transgressions'.

(54) Cf. Lev. XXVI, 19; Deut. XXVIII, 23.

(55) Tumult, turmoil as opposite to peace. V. II Chron. XV, 5. Cf. Deut. *ibid.* 20.

(56) V. Num. XV, 19ff.

(57) Cf. Lev. *ibid.* 25; Deut. *ibid.* 21.

(58) Either, because the Torah expressly, or impliedly, excludes those matters from the

competency of a human court, or, because the sins, though committed, have not come to the knowledge of the judicial authorities, or, at a time when a Jewish tribunal is not able to promulgate or enforce capital punishment.

(59) The Sabbatical year (Shemittah); v. Lev. XXV, 6-7.

(60) Cf. Lev. XXVI, 25.

(61) Lit., 'oppression (better, suppression) of judgment', a term used of deliberate methods of unduly prolonging proceedings and of general interference with the course of justice calculated to delay the ultimate decision. It is also used of unnecessarily postponing an execution (Sanh. XI, 4).

(62) V. *supra* III, 11.

(63) Cf. Lev. *ibid.* 22.

(64) Including 'false' swearing. V. *supra* IV, 7, notes.

(65) V. *ibid.*

(66) Cf. Lev. *ibid.*, 33; Deut. *ibid.*, 36, 64.

(67) These three are among the 'Seven Precepts of the Sons of Noah'.

(68) V. Ex. XXIII, 10, 11; Lev. XXV, 3-5.

(69) Lit., 'the goings out of'.

(70) Succoth, The 'Feast' par excellence. Three times does Scripture enjoin to rejoice thereon, viz. Lev. XXIII, 40, Deut.

XVI, 14 and 15.

(71) V. Deut. XIV, 28 f.

(72) Lev. XXV, 6-7; Ex. XXIII, 11.

(73) Viz., Leket (gleaning), Pe'ah (the corner sc. of the field), v. Lev. XIX, 9. and Shikehah ('forgotten' sc. sheaves) v. Deut. XXIV, 19, which were to be left to the poor. With the end of Succoth, the Festival of Ingathering, i.e., the completion of the agricultural year, the failure to carry out those observances in the past year, brings in its wake Divine punishment. V. Buchler, Sin and Atonement, p. 383.

(74) מדה מדה: = a measure (quantitative or qualitative), a standard by which one judges or is judged, characteristic, quality, type.

(75) The attitude of a 'self-contained', smug, selfishness is unethical and immoral, wicked from the highest point of view (the Hasid's), though one cannot call it an illegitimate one (v. Buchler, Some Types, p. 38). Anyone might say, 'if I am not for myself, who will be for me?' but a Hillel (who is often called a Hasid) adds, 'but if I am for myself only, what am I?' Commentators quote Ezek. XVI, 49 Behold thy sister Sodom: she strengthened not the hand of the poor and needy.

(76) 'Am Ha-arez; v. note to II, 6. L. understands 'mine is thine', as 'on condition that thine is mine.'

(77) Hasid, v. *supra* II, 6.

(78) According to Hoffmann, Erste Mischna, p. 28, this was the last paragraph in the Tractate Aboth underlying ARM.

(V. Buchler op. cit., p. 41.)

(79) Cf. *supra* II, 1.

(80) **הסיד** He is not free from the tendency, common to all men, to become angry, but by his self-control he reduces that inclination to the least proportions. (Cf. supra IV, 1), v. M. The designation of such a man as a Hasid would account for the epithet of **הסיד** given to Hillel after his death, Sotah 48b, cf. Buchler op. cit., p. 39.

(81) Lit., 'to hear'.

(82) Lit. 'lose'.

(83) MV and others (including p.B. versions), 'a goodly portion', clearly in contrast to the next category.

(84) Commentators remark that the terms **הסיד** and **רשע** (i.e., 'pious' and 'wicked') are not used here, because these refer to moral qualities, whereas this dictum deals with intellectual ability.

(85) Lit., 'the givers of alms' **צדקה** = righteousness, applied in Rabbinic phraseology to helping those in need, which is viewed as an act of social justice.

(86) I.e., grudging; v. supra II, 9.

(87) He thinks the poor have enough with what he has given, and grudges them the additional help they might get from others. B and others: He grudges other would-be donors the credit that would accrue to them for their charitableness.

(88) Seeking to cut off all possible sources of help from the poor man is tantamount to a deliberate attempt to starve him.

(89) Lit., 'those who go to.'

(90) Lit., 'does.' Buchler, op. cit. p. 40f. has shown that it must refer to practicing (the moral and ethical teachings of the school).

(91) Even though his attendance has not yet had the desired result. 'Great is Midrash (learning) in that it brings one to Ma'aseh (deed).'

(92) He practices the precepts and leads a good-life by following the example of others, but does not take the trouble to acquire for himself a first hand knowledge of the Torah.

(93) As Hasid refers to a man's conduct towards his fellowman, its use here can only be explained by supposing that the Beth ha-Midrash for the ordinary man was not a place for academic instruction but for the imparting of ethical and religious guidance for every-day life. (V. Buchler, *ibid.*)

(94) Not only does he fail to perform the precepts, for which there may be the excuse of lack of knowledge, but by keeping away from the school he willfully precludes his ever acquiring the knowledge, or coming under the influence, which could in time enable him to lead a worthier life.

(95) Mishnah 12 dealt with qualities of memory among 'disciples', our Mishnah with the capacity of advanced students ('those who sit before the wise') for examining knowledge acquired from one's teachers and arriving at one's own conclusions, (cf. B. and L.).

(96) Taylor, 'bolt-sieve' v. note below.

(97) If **קמה** means coarse flour and no fine flour, as they are usually translated, then what should one understand by **נפה**? What we know as a sieve would, contrary to the description of the Mishnah, let through the **סלה** (fine flour) and retain the **קמה** (coarse flour). According to M., R., and B, **נפה** is an ordinary sieve but **קמה** is the very fine part of the ground corn which forms a kind of superfine dust or powder of almost useless quality. It is the part which is thicker than this, and remains in the sieve, that is **סלה** Taylor renders 'bolt-sieve' which he describes: 'It sifts the ground corn at once into three sorts. The corn in the bolter descends an incline, passing first over a fine cloth, and then over a coarse cloth: the former lets through the fine flour, which is caught in a receptacle attached to the machine: the process is repeated at the second cloth: the third quality, coarse bran, passes out at the end of the bolter.' This description tallies with the function of **נפה** as described in II ARM Ch. XLV, q.v. What types of students are intended by these similes? M. says: The Sponge: He absorbs, and mostly retains, all he is taught without any discrimination whatsoever. The Funnel: He takes all the knowledge poured into him, but he lets it escape him almost as quickly as he gets it. The Strainer: He retains the least useful and lets out the best. The Sieve: Retains the best and discards the inferior. L. explains differently: The Sponge: Absorbs all, the good and the inferior, indiscriminately, and is unable to give out his mixed knowledge unless he is pressed by many insistent questions. The Funnel: Also allows everything in indiscriminately. But can and does easily pass on what he has learnt to others, though, again, indiscriminately. The Strainer: Takes all but separates the pure from the dregs, passes the former on to others, and retains, but eventually discards, the latter. (This is the best type of scholar.) The Sieve: Solet being (according to L.) the very finest flour-dust or powder which the sieve retains (because it adheres to the sieve), this (would-be) scholar 'feeds' others with the inferior and leaves the best altogether. (This is the scholar of a perverted mind, the worst type.)

(98) So 13. followed by Oesterley; M. (followed by Singer. P.B.): 'material cause'.

(99) Reading according to a suggestion by Baer **בתמר** The usual reading **ותמר** 'and Tamar' cannot be right because Tamar did not love Amnon, v. II Samuel XIII. (Even verse 13 suggests no more than a mere possibility that she was not actually averse to him.)

(100) V. I Sam. XVIII, 1; *Ibid.* XX, 17; II Sam. I, 26.

(101) V. supra I, 11, notes.

(102) Cf. supra IV, 11.

(103) According to 'Er. 13b, a Bath Kol (Heavenly Voice) declared, 'Both these (the words of Hillel) and these (the words of Shammai) are the words of the Living God.'



(104) V. Num. XVI. For the phrase Korah and all his congregation v. *ibid* 6 and *passim*.  
 (105) The public, the people in general.  
 (106) Or 'to have merit.'  
 (107) So that he be not punished whilst his disciples or followers are rewarded (ARM).  
 (108) For the phrase cf. *supra* IV, 5.  
 (109) Lit., 'to do repentance.' Perhaps לעשות should be translated to attain, achieve'. Cf. the use of the verb in Deut. VIII, 17. The door of repentance is closed to him 'since the sins of others are beyond the remedial action of his repentance' (Singer, P.B.). Also, if his repentance were accepted, he would escape punishment, whilst those whom he had misled would be undergoing it (ARM).  
 (110) I.e. attributed to him; he is given credit therefore.  
 (111) Deut. XXXIII, 21.  
 (112) 1 Kings XV, 30.  
 (113) So designated in Jewish literature, as 'his wickedness is proved by his own willingness, even eagerness, to go with Balak's messengers, and his 'apologies' for not being able to curse Israel; it is he, too, who is said to have counseled the seduction of the Israelites by the Moabite women.  
 (114) V. *supra* II, 9. Abraham demonstrated his generous and ungrudging nature in his dealings with the King of Sodom (Gen. XIV, 22f.) and with Ephron the Hittite (Gen. XXIII).  
 (115) Abraham's humility is evident from his words: . . . I . . . ' who am but dust and ashes (Gen. XVIII, 27).  
 (116) נפש (soul) is used here of 'desire', 'appetite', a meaning which it has already in Biblical Hebrew. שפלה would thus mean 'kept low', 'subdued'. Cf. Abraham's dealing with Lot, Gen. XIII. The three above qualities are among those sought for when appointing judges. v. J. Sanh. I, 4.  
 (117) Balaam's avarice is clear from his own words; v. Num. XXII, 18; XXIV, 13.  
 (118) A reference to Balaam's claim that he was one that . knoweth the knowledge of the Most High (Num. XXIV, 16).  
 (119) Balaam's 'handling' of Balak, and his attempts at 'outwitting' God, reveal an insatiable desire for power.  
 (120) Lit., 'eat', cf. Pe'ah 1,2.  
 (121) This is taken as a reference to Abraham of whom God said, Abraham who loved me (Isa. XLI, 8).  
 (122) Prov. VIII, 21. It seems that 'to inherit substance' is intended as a reference to that which the disciples of Abraham receive in this world and 'that I may fill their treasuries' to their reward in the world to come. Cf. the treatment of Ps. CXXVIII, 2, *supra* IV. 1. Some take the whole quotation to refer to the reward in the hereafter, the word for

'substance' יש 'being aggadically explained (in 'Uk. III, 12) as a Gematria (v. *supra* 111, 18) equaling three hundred and ten, sc. worlds, which God allots to the righteous.  
 (123) Cf. *supra* 1, 5; v. note on next Mishnah.  
 (124) Ps. LV, 24. This twofold designation fits Balaam who by his evil counsel (v. p. 72, n. 1) brought about the death of 24,000 Israelites, v. Num. XXV, 9.  
 (125) Mentioned in the Mishnah only here (though it is held by some that this paragraph, too, is a later addition, v. note to Mishnah 10), but a few times in Tosef. In Hag. 14a he is referred as one of the משנה בעלי 'Masters of the Mishnah'. As we do not find him mentioned together with any particular Tanna we cannot determine in which generation he lived (Frankel Darke ha-Mishnah, p. 213).  
 (126) I.e., (negatively) fearless, and (positively) challenging. For this quality in the service of God v. Isa. L, 6-7; Ps. XL, 10-11; CXIX, 46.  
 (127) Cf. II Sam. I, 23.  
 (128) Cf. Ps. CXIX, 60. 1 made haste, and delayed not, to observe Thy commandments. Cf. *supra* IV, 2.  
 (129) Cf. II Sam. *ibid*. They were stronger than lions.  
 (130) 'Father' is a characteristic appellation of God in the Hebrew Bible, e.g., Deut. XXXII, 6,15 not He thy father? Jer. III, 4, Didst thou not just now cry unto Me: 'My father' . . . ' Mal. II, 10, Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us. V. also Jer. *ibid*, 29; Mal. I, 6. The God in, or of, Heaven, too, is frequent, e.g., Gen. XXIV, 3, 7, etc. The Biblical passage which is most probably the source of (if not itself to be traced to) the combined expression 'Our Father in Heaven' is Isa. LXIII, 15,16, Look down from heaven even from Thy holy habitation for Thou art our Father Thou, O Lord, art our Father. V. Marmorstein, The old, 'tabb. Doctrine of God, p. 56ff. MV notes here 'Tractate Aboth is Ended' and then gives the dictum about man's successive ages.  
 (131) עז פניה Deut. XXVIII, 50, 'fierce of countenance' synonymous with insolence ('that shall not regard the person of the old') and callousness ('nor show favor to the young') cf. Dan. VIII, 23. In Eccl. VIII, 1, עז פניו 'the boldness of his face' means (according to 13DB.) 'impudence'. In Rabbinic Hebrew the expression stands for supineness and impudence in general; as a characteristic it is looked upon among the most undesirable. Rabbi Judah ha-Nasi was wont to offer up a private prayer that he be spared from meeting 'Azzuth Panim in other people, and from being himself tainted there with (Ber. 16b). This private prayer has since been incorporated among the statutory daily prayers (P.B. p. 7).  
 (132) גי בני הנום interchangeably with גי בני הנום in Josh. XV, 8, and elsewhere is the Valley of (the son of) Hinnom SSW of Jerusalem. According to II Kings XXIII, 20; Jer. VII, 31f; XIX, 6, 9, etc., etc., it was the place

where children were sacrificed, by burning, to Moloch. It was also known as **תּוֹפֶת** (Topheth) or the Valley of Slaughter. The revolting associations of the place evidently led to the transference of its name to the most horrifying place in human imagination, the place of punishment of the wicked in the hereafter. Some Rabbinic traditions place Gehinnom of the hereafter below the valley of that name, but there are also other supposed locations. The Moloch worship in the actual valley of Hinnom together with Isa. LXVI, 24, (the carcasses of the men that have rebelled against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched) which suggests that the punishment of the wicked is to be by fire, has invested the Gehinnom of the hereafter with the characteristics of 'hell'. The methods and duration of punishment in Gehinnom are also matters on which opinions differ. V. f.E.

(133) Cf. Yeb. 79a: A sense of shame (i.e., the opp. to insolence and self-assertiveness) compassion, and the practice of disinterested kindness are the characteristics of Israel.

(134) **גן עדן** The :celestial Garden of Eden, 'paradise' — the abode of the righteous — of which the terrestrial one, spoken of in Gen. II and III, is the model (v. also Ezek. XXXI which speaks of the trees in Eden in the garden of God) or (according to some) vice-versa. In the popular conception the two are not kept separate. Views as to its location, dimension, appearance, etc. differ in the Midrashic and Talmudic references, It is often used as synonymous with 'Olam Habba, 'the world-to-come.' Some distinguish between Eden and the Garden of Eden. The Garden, they say, is but a part of Eden; Adam and Eve were only in the Garden, but no mortal eye has yet perceived the real, unspeakably more wonderful, Eden. V. J.E. Articles 'Eden, Garden of' and 'Paradise'. Taylor: This part of the Mishnah is probably a later addition borrowed from Tractate Kallah.

(135) Many edd. add 'and God of our Fathers.'

(136) P.B. versions 'the Sanctuary.'

(137) Taylor (followed by Oesterley) 'grant us our portion.'

(138) Elijah Wilna says this paragraph should be at the end of the chapter. In MV it is at the end of Chapter VI.

(139) MV, also other texts, attribute this dictum to Samuel the Little. In some versions it is preceded by the dictum which is also found in the latter's name in IV, 19. By some, our Mishnah is credited to Ben He-He, whose name occurs in the next Mishnah.

(140) **מִקְרָא** (v. Meh. VIII, 8), lit., that which was (to be) read sc. from a written text (synonymous with 'The Law in Writing'), as distinguished from **מִשְׁנָה** 'that which was (to be) recited sc. from hearing and memory' (synonymous with 'The Law which was (transmitted) by (word of) mouth'). The five years

here are said to be based on the analogy of the newly planted tree, the fruit of which becomes available for general consumption in the fifth year (Lev. XIX, 25).

(141) **מִשְׁנָה** v. previous note. The age of ten in this connection is explained thus: In Num. IV, 3', etc. the period of a Levite's service is commanded to begin 'from thirty years old', but *ibid.* VIII, 24, 'from twenty-five years old.' The discrepancy is explained by allotting five years for the Levite's training before he becomes proficient for his sacred duties (v. Hui. 24a). Five years is, thus, an accepted period for the first phase of education. Commencing Scripture at five, one is ready for Mishnah at ten.

(142) In connection with many precepts, references to the committing of sins and penalties, the term **אִישׁ** — 'man' — is used; hence the age at which one becomes subject to Mitzwoth and penalties is thirteen, when the boy is said to have matured into a 'man' (v. Elijah Wilna to this Mishnah). This, of course, underlies the Bar-Mizwah institution, which, however, in the present usage of the term, appears to be of much later origin, V. Schechter, *Studies in Judaism (First Series)*, p. 378ff.

(143) **לְמִוְדָה** Used here, apparently, in the special sense of study based on the Mishnah or Oral Learning (though not, of course, in the specific sense that we use it), rather than study in general. At the age of fifteen, he will have completed the second five years' stage of his studies.

(144) Eighteen was the age recommended at which a man should marry so that he may fulfill the precept, 'When a man taketh a new wife, he shall not go out in the host' one year, and shall cheer his wife whom he hath taken (Deut. XXIV, 5) and yet be ready to undertake military service at the age of twenty (Num. I, 3 *passim*).

(145) Some: For military service which began 'from twenty years old' (Num. *ibid.*). Most commentators: for pursuing, seeking, a livelihood. This will have given him a further five-year period (from fifteen to twenty) for devoting himself to Talmud before setting out in earnest on a worldly career. Others explain 'for pursuing' to mean for quickness, zest, impetuosity, in the pursuit of one's desires or ideals (so Abrabanel, v. Taylor).

(146) Thirty was the age at which a Levite entered upon his full duties which comprised the work of service and the work of bearing burdens (Num. IV, 47); these duties being so comprehensive and arduous required the possession of full physical faculties i.e. **כֹּחַ** Scripture thus considers thirty the age for strength. V. also *ibid.* VII, 9.

(147) According to Num. VIII, 25f.: from the age of fifty years they (the Levites) shall return from the service of the work, and shall serve no more; but shall minister with their brethren in the tent of meeting, to keep the charge, but they shall do no manner of service. As their ministrations were not in

the nature of actual work, they must then have served in the capacity of responsible counselors. Hence fifty must be the age when a man becomes fitted for giving counsel.

(148) V. II Sam. V, 4: David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years. i.e., he lived seventy years; and I Chron. XXIX, 28, And he (David) died in a good old age (שיבה = hoary head). Thus שיבה is reached at the age of seventy.

(149) Cf. Ps. XC, 10.

(150) לשויה The Bibl. Root שויה means 'sink down' and its cognates שחה and שחה 'bend', 'bow down'. Others take שויה here as a noun which in the Bible occurs in a feminine form שוחה 'pit', 'grave'.

(151) Elijah Wilna cites Isa. LXV, 20, There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the youth shall die one hundred years old, and points out that the context there shows that this is intended as a blessing. Thus the extreme limit up to which life is a blessing is a hundred years; and one who exceeds that limit is as one who no more belongs to the world. Exceptions to this are very rare; and in the case of Moses, Scripture found it necessary to say: his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated (Deut. XXXIV, 7).

(152) MV has this passage at the end of Chapter VI, together with the prayer in Mishnah 20.

(153) His full name, Johanan b. Bag Bag, occurs in J. Keth. V: 4. Tos. V, as a contemporary of R. Judah b. Bathyra. Tosaf. Yom Tob a.l. says the name is omitted here, as also in Ben He-He's case, because they did not live long (cf. Ben Zoma and Ben 'Azzai supra IV beginning), and quotes Rashbam to the effect that Ben Bag Bag and Ben He-He were proselytes, and בן הן הן means a son of Abraham and Sarah, to whose respective names God had, as a sign of favor, added the letter ה and whose spiritual 'parenthood' is assumed for all proselytes; בג (in Ben Bag Bag) is the numerical equivalent of ה (five). He was so called to distinguish him from b. He He (v. Tosaf. to Hag. 9b). Bacher AT, I, p. 10f. suggests the following explanation of the two names: In Shab. 31a, etc. we have the story of the would-be proselyte who desired to learn Torah, but only the written and not the oral (traditional). Hillel cured him of his contempt for the oral tradition by letting him see that the knowledge of the very names of the letters of the Alphabet depended on oral tradition, e.g., he pointed out to him that we know ב is Beth and ג is Gimmel and not vice-versa only by means of oral instruction. Such a disciple might well have earned for himself the name בן הן הן (the one who learnt that ה is He). They, or (if they are identical) he, may have derived the sayings given here in the two names from Hillel himself as in I ARM XII, both sayings are in the name of Hillel (in II ARM XXVII the first in Hillel's name, the second in that of בן הן הן as in our text). There is also a suggestion that בג is formed

from the initial letters of בן הן בן son of proselytes,' (v. MV).

(154) The Torah.

(155) Lowe's MS. Adds וכולך בה 'and thy all is therein,' for which Taylor adduces Eccl. XII, 13, and this (i.e., fearing God and observing his commandments) is the whole of wan.

(156) Look deeply, contemplate. MV: ובה תהוי 'and therein (thou shouldst) have thy being.'

(157) Cf. Ps. XCII, 15.

(158) Cf. the frequent admonitions not to turn aside from the Law to the right or to the left.

(159) מדה v. p. 67, n. 3.

(160) V. p. 76, n. 7.

(161) A proverb of general application, but here it has special reference to the labor and energy devoted to the study of the Torah.

## Avoth Chapter 6

*THE SAGES TAUGHT IN THE STYLE<sup>1</sup> OF THE MISHNAH;<sup>2</sup> BLESSED BE HE WHO HAS APPROVED<sup>3</sup> THEM AND THEIR TEACHING.<sup>4</sup>*

**BARAITHA 1. R. MEIR SAID: WHOEVER OCCUPIES HIMSELF WITH THE TORAH FOR ITS OWN SAKE, ACQUIRES BY MERIT MANY THINGS, NAY MORE, THE WHOLE OF THE WORLD IS WORTH WHILE FOR HIS SAKE. HE IS CALLED A FRIEND,<sup>5</sup> A BELOVED,<sup>6</sup> ONE THAT LOVES THE ALL-PRESENT, ONE THAT LOVES [HIS FELLOW-] CREATURES.<sup>7</sup> ONE THAT GLADDENS GOD,<sup>8</sup> ONE THAT GLADDENS MAN;<sup>8</sup> AND IT [I. E. THE TORAH] CLOTHES HIM<sup>9</sup> WITH MEEKNESS AND FEAR,<sup>10</sup> AND FITS<sup>11</sup> HIM TO BE RIGHTEOUS, PIOUS, UPRIGHT AND FAITHFUL; IT ALSO KEEPS HIM FAR FROM SIN, AND BRINGS HIM NEAR TO MERIT [ORIOUS CONDUCT]; AND MEN BENEFIT FROM HIM BY [WAY OF] COUNSEL, SOUND KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND STRENGTH, AS IT IS SAID, COUNSEL IS MINE AND SOUND WISDOM; I AM UNDERSTANDING, POWER IS MINE;<sup>12</sup> AND IT GIVES HIM SOVEREIGNTY<sup>13</sup> AND DOMINION,<sup>14</sup> AND [THE FACULTY TO BE] SEARCHING IN JUDGMENT;<sup>15</sup> AND THEY REVEAL TO HIM<sup>16</sup> THE SECRET MEANINGS<sup>17</sup> OF THE TORAH, AND HE IS MADE AS A WELL THAT EVER GATHERS FORCE,<sup>18</sup> AND LIKE A STREAM THAT NEVER**

# OVOS

CEASES;<sup>19</sup> AND HE BECOMES MODEST, LONG-SUFFERING AND FORGIVING OF INSULT TOWARDS HIMSELF; AND IT MAKES HIM GREAT, AND EXALTS HIM ABOVE ALL THE WORKS [OF GOD].

**BARAITHA 2.** R. JOSHUA B. LEVI<sup>20</sup> SAID: EVERY DAY A BATH KOL<sup>21</sup> GOES FORTH FROM MOUNT HOREB, AND MAKES PROCLAMATION AND SAYS: WOE UNTO MEN ON ACCOUNT OF [THEIR] CONTEMPT TOWARDS THE TORAH,<sup>22</sup> FOR WHOEVER OCCUPIES HIMSELF NOT WITH THE [STUDY OF] TORAH IS CALLED: '[THE] REBUKED [ONE]'<sup>23</sup> AS IT IS SAID, AS A RING OF GOLD IN A SWINE'S SNOUT, SO IS A FAIR WOMAN THAT TURNETH AWAY FROM DISCRETION,<sup>24</sup> AND IT SAYS, AND THE TABLES WERE THE WORK OF GOD, AND THE WRITING WAS THE WRITING OF GOD, GRAVEN UPON THE TABLES.<sup>25</sup> READ NOT HARUTH [WHICH MEANS 'GRAVEN'] BUT HERUTH [WHICH MEANS 'FREEDOM'].<sup>26</sup> FOR THERE IS NO FREE MAN FOR THEE BUT HE THAT OCCUPIES HIMSELF WITH THE STUDY OF THE TORAH; AND WHOEVER REGULARLY OCCUPIES HIMSELF WITH THE STUDY OF THE TORAH, LO, HE IS EXALTED, AS IT IS SAID, AND FROM MATTANAH TO NAHALIEL; AND NAHALIEL TO BAMOTH.<sup>27</sup>

**BARAITHA 3.** HE WHO LEARNS FROM HIS FELLOW ONE SINGLE SECTION,<sup>28</sup> OR ONE SINGLE RULE,<sup>29</sup> OR ONE SINGLE VERSE,<sup>30</sup> OR ONE SINGLE EXPRESSION,<sup>31</sup> OR EVEN ONE SINGLE LETTER,<sup>32</sup> IS UNDER OBLIGATION TO TREAT HIM WITH HONOR; FOR SO WE FIND WITH DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL, WHO LEARNT FROM AHITOPHEL TWO THINGS ONLY,<sup>33</sup> [YET] CALLED HIM HIS MASTER, HIS COMPANION AND HIS FAMILIAR FRIEND, AS IT IS SAID, BUT IT WAS THOU, A MAN MINE EQUAL, MY COMPANION<sup>34</sup> AND MY FAMILIAR FRIEND.<sup>35</sup> IS THIS NOT [AN INSTANCE OF THE ARGUMENT] 'FROM THE LESS TO THE GREATER'?<sup>36</sup> WHAT [WAS IT IN THE CASE

OF] DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL? [IT WAS] THAT HE HAD LEARNT FROM AHITOPHEL TWO THINGS ONLY, [YET] HE CALLED HIM HIS MASTER, HIS COMPANION AND HIS FAMILIAR FRIEND; [THEN IN THE CASE OF] ONE WHO LEARNS FROM HIS FELLOW A SECTION, A RULE, A VERSE OR AN EXPRESSION OR EVEN ONE LETTER, THERE ARE FOR [EVERY] ONE [REASON IN THE FORMER CASE] EVER SO MANY [REASONS IN THE LATTER CASE, FOR CONCLUDING] THAT HE IS UNDER OBLIGATION TO TREAT HIM [I.E. HIS FELLOW] WITH HONOR. AND 'HONOR' MEANS NOTHING BUT TORAH, AS IT IS SAID, THE WISE SHALL INHERIT HONOR,<sup>37</sup> AND THE PERFECT SHALL INHERIT GOOD,<sup>38</sup> AND IT IS [ALSO] SAID, FOR I GIVE YOU GOOD DOCTRINE; FORSAKE YE NOT MY TEACHING [TORAH].<sup>39</sup>

**BARAITHA 4.** SUCH IS THE WAY [OF LIFE CONDUCIVE TO THE STUDY] OF THE TORAH: A MORSEL OF BREAD WITH SALT<sup>40</sup> THOU SHALT EAT, AND WATER BY MEASURE THOU SHALT DRINK,<sup>41</sup> AND UPON THE GROUND THOU SHALT SLEEP, AND A LIFE OF PRIVATION THOU SHALT LIVE, AND IN THE TORAH SHALT THOU LABOR.<sup>42</sup> IF THOU DOEST THUS, HAPPY SHALT THOU BE, AND IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEE;<sup>43</sup> HAPPY SHALT THOU BE IN THIS WORLD, AND IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEE IN THE WORLD TO COME. SEEK NOT GREATNESS FOR THYSELF, AND COVET NOT HONOR MORE THAN THY LEARNING;<sup>44</sup> NEITHER CRAVE THOU FOR THE TABLE OF KINGS,<sup>45</sup> FOR THY TABLE IS GREATER THAN THEIR TABLE, AND THY CROWN IS GREATER THAN THEIR CROWN,<sup>46</sup> AND FAITHFUL IS THINE EMPLOYER TO PAY THEE THE REWARD OF THY LABOR.<sup>47</sup>

**BARAITHA 5.** GREATER IS THE TORAH THAN THE PRIESTHOOD AND THAN THE KINGSHIP, SEEING THAT THE KINGSHIP IS ACQUIRED IN [THE FORM OF]<sup>48</sup> THIRTY<sup>49</sup> DISTINCTIONS,<sup>50</sup> AND THE PRIESTHOOD IN



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[THE FORM OF] TWENTY-FOUR,<sup>51</sup> BUT THE TORAH IN [THE FORM OF] FORTY-EIGHT THINGS,<sup>52</sup> AND THESE THEY ARE IN: [THE FORM OF] STUDY, ATTENTIVE LISTENING,<sup>53</sup> ORDERED PRESENTATION [OF ONE'S STUDY-MATTER] WITH [ONE'S] LIPS,<sup>54</sup> REASONING OF THE HEART,<sup>55</sup> INTELLIGENCE OF THE HEART,<sup>56</sup> AWE,<sup>57</sup> FEAR,<sup>58</sup> HUMILITY,<sup>59</sup> JOYOUSNESS,<sup>60</sup> MINISTERING UNTO THE SAGES,<sup>61</sup> PAINSTAKING EXAMINATION [OF A SUBJECT,] TOGETHER WITH [ONE'S] COLLEAGUES,<sup>62</sup> FINE ARGUMENTATION OF DISCIPLES,<sup>63</sup> SE DATENESS,<sup>64</sup> [KNOWLEDGE OF] SCRIPTURE, [KNOWLEDGE OF] THE ORAL LEARNING, MODERATION IN SLEEP,<sup>65</sup> MODERATION IN GOSSIP,<sup>66</sup> MODERATION IN [WORLDLY] PLEASURE,<sup>67</sup> MODERATION IN HILARITY,<sup>68</sup> MODERATION IN WORLDLY INTERCOURSE,<sup>69</sup> LONG-SUFFERING, A GOOD HEART,<sup>70</sup> THE CONSCIENTIOUSNESS OF THE SAGES,<sup>71</sup> [UNCOMPLAINING] ACCEPTANCE OF [DIVINE] CHASTISEMENTS.<sup>72</sup>

*BARAITHA 6.* [THE POSSESSOR OF TORAH IS ONE] WHO RECOGNIZES HIS PLACE,<sup>73</sup> WHO REJOICES IN HIS PORTION,<sup>74</sup> WHO MAKES A FENCE<sup>75</sup> TO HIS WORDS,<sup>76</sup> WHO CLAIMS NO CREDIT FOR HIMSELF,<sup>77</sup> IS LOVED, LOVES THE ALL-PRESENT, LOVES [HIS FELLOW] CREATURES,<sup>78</sup> LOVES RIGHTEOUS WAYS,<sup>79</sup> WELCOMES<sup>80</sup> REPROOFS [OF HIMSELF],<sup>81</sup> LOVES UPRIGHTNESS,<sup>82</sup> KEEPS HIMSELF FAR FROM HONOR[S],<sup>83</sup> LETS NOT HIS HEART BECOME SWELLED ON ACCOUNT OF HIS LEARNING, DELIGHTS NOT IN GIVING LEGAL DECISIONS,<sup>84</sup> SHARES IN THE BEARING OF A BURDEN<sup>85</sup> WITH HIS COLLEAGUE,<sup>86</sup> USES HIS WEIGHT WITH HIM ON THE SCALE OF MERIT,<sup>87</sup> PLACES HIM UPON [A GROUNDWORK OF] TRUTH,<sup>88</sup> PLACES HIM UPON [A GROUNDWORK OF] PEACE,<sup>89</sup> COMPOSES HIMSELF<sup>90</sup> AT HIS STUDY,<sup>91</sup> ASKS AND ANSWERS,<sup>92</sup> LISTENS [TO OTHERS], AND [HIMSELF] ADDS [TO HIS KNOWLEDGE],<sup>93</sup> LEARNS IN ORDER TO TEACH,<sup>94</sup> LEARNS IN ORDER TO

PRACTICE,<sup>94</sup> MAKES HIS TEACHER WISER,<sup>95</sup> NOTES WITH PRECISION THAT WHICH HE HAS HEARD,<sup>96</sup> AND SAYS A THING IN THE NAME OF HIM WHO SAID IT. LO, THOU HAST LEARNT: EVERYONE THAT SAYS A THING IN THE NAME OF HIM WHO SAID IT, BRINGS DELIVERANCE INTO THE WORLD, AS IT IS SAID: AND ESTHER TOLD THE KING THEREOF IN MORDECAI'S NAME.<sup>97</sup>

*BARAITHA 7.* GREAT IS TORAH FOR IT GIVES LIFE, UNTO THOSE 'THAT PRACTICE IT, IN THIS WORLD, AND IN THE WORLD TO COME, AS IT IS SAID: FOR THEY<sup>98</sup> ARE LIFE UNTO THOSE THAT FIND THEM, AND HEALTH TO ALL THEIR FLESH,<sup>99</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: IT<sup>98</sup> SHALL BE HEALTH TO THY NAVEL, AND MARROW TO THY BONES,<sup>100</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO] SHE<sup>101</sup> IS A TREE OF LIFE TO THEM THAT LAY HOLD UPON HER, AND HAPPY IS EVERYONE THAT HOLDETH HER FAST,<sup>102</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: FOR THEY<sup>101</sup> SHALL BE A CHAPLET OF GRACE UNTO THY HEAD, AND CHAINS ABOUT THY NECK,<sup>103</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: SHE<sup>101</sup> WILL GIVE TO THY HEAD A CHAPLET OF GRACE; A CROWN OF GLORY WILL SHE BESTOW ON THEE,<sup>104</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: LENGTH OF DAYS IS IN HER<sup>101</sup> RIGHT HAND; IN HER LEFT HAND ARE RICHES AND HONOR,<sup>105</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: FOR LENGTH OF DAYS, AND YEARS OF LIFE, AND PEACE, WILL THEY<sup>101</sup> ADD TO THEE.<sup>106</sup>

*BARAITHA 8.* R. SIMEON B. JUDAH<sup>107</sup> SAID IN THE NAME OF R. SIMEON B. YOHAI:<sup>108</sup> COMELINESS, STRENGTH, RICHES, HONOR, WISDOM, OLD AGE, HOARY AGE, AND CHILDREN<sup>109</sup> ARE BECOMING TO THE RIGHTEOUS, AND BECOMING TO THE WORLD, AS IT IS SAID: THE HOARY HEAD IS A CROWN OF GLORY, IT IS FOUND IN THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,<sup>110</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: THE CROWN OF THE WISE IS THEIR RICHES,<sup>111</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: CHILDREN'S CHILDREN ARE THE CROWN OF OLD MEN; AND THE GLORY OF CHILDREN ARE THEIR FATHERS,<sup>112</sup> AND IT

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SAYS [ALSO]: THE GLORY OF YOUNG MEN IS THEIR STRENGTH; AND THE BEAUTY OF OLD MEN IS THE HOARY HEAD,<sup>113</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: THE MOON SHALL BE CONFOUNDED, AND THE SUN ASHAMED; FOR THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL REIGN IN MOUNT ZION, AND IN JERUSALEM, AND BEFORE HIS ELDERS SHALL BE GLORY.<sup>114</sup>

*BARAITHA* 9. R. SIMEON B. MENASYA<sup>115</sup> SAID: THESE SEVEN QUALITIES,<sup>116</sup> WHICH THE SAGES HAVE ENUMERATED [AS BECOMING] TO THE RIGHTEOUS, WERE ALL OF THEM REALIZED IN RABBI AND HIS SONS.<sup>117</sup> R. JOSE B. KISMA<sup>118</sup> SAID: ONCE I WAS WALKING BY THE WAY WHEN A MAN MET ME, AND GAVE ME [THE SALUTATION OF] 'PEACE',<sup>119</sup> AND I RETURNED HIM [THE SALUTATION OF] PEACE'. SAID HE TO ME, RABBI, FROM WHAT PLACE ART THOU?' SAID I TO HIM, 'FROM A GREAT CITY OF SAGES AND SCRIBES AM I.' SAID HE TO ME, 'RABBI, [SHOULD IT BE] THY PLEASURE THAT THOU DWELL WITH US IN OUR PLACE, I WILL GIVE THEE A THOUSAND THOUSAND DENARII OF GOLD,<sup>120</sup> AND PRECIOUS STONES AND PEARLS.' SAID I TO HIM: 'IF THOU SHOULDST GIVE ME ALL THE SILVER AND GOLD, PRECIOUS STONES AND PEARLS THAT ARE IN THE WORLD, I WOULD NOT DWELL [ANYWHERE] EXCEPTING IN A PLACE OF TORAH; FOR IN THE HOUR OF THE DEPARTURE OF A MAN [FROM THE WORLD], THERE ACCOMPANY HIM NEITHER GOLD NOR SILVER, NOR PRECIOUS STONES NOR PEARLS, BUT TORAH AND GOOD DEEDS ALONE, AS IT IS SAID, WHEN THOU WALKEST, IT SHALL LEAD THEE, WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, IT SHALL WATCH OVER THEE; AND WHEN THOU WAKEST, IT SHALL TALK WITH THEE.<sup>121</sup> WHEN THOU WALKEST, IT SHALL LEAD THEE — IN THIS WORLD, WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, IT SHALL WATCH OVER THEE — IN THE GRAVE,<sup>122</sup> AND WHEN THOU WAKEST, IT SHALL TALK WITH THEE<sup>123</sup> — IN THE WORLD TO COME; AND THUS IT IS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF

PSALMS BY DAVID, KING OF ISRAEL, THE LAW OF THY MOUTH IS BETTER UNTO ME THAN THOUSANDS OF GOLD AND SILVER,<sup>124</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: MINE IS THE SILVER, AND MINE THE GOLD, SAITH THE LORD OF HOSTS.<sup>125</sup>

*BARAITHA* 10. FIVE<sup>126</sup> POSSESSIONS HAS THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, [SPECIFICALLY] DECLARED HIS OWN IN HIS WORLD, AND THESE THEY ARE: THE TORAH, ONE POSSESSION, THE SANCTUARY, ONE [OTHER] POSSESSION,<sup>127</sup> HEAVEN AND EARTH, ONE [MORE] POSSESSION, ABRAHAM, ONE [OTHER] POSSESSION,<sup>128</sup> ISRAEL, ONE [MORE] POSSESSION. THE TORAH IS ONE<sup>129</sup> POSSESSION. WHENCE [DO WE INFER THIS]? SINCE IT IS WRITTEN, THE LORD POSSESSED ME<sup>130</sup> AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS WAY, BEFORE HIS WORKS OF OLD.<sup>131</sup> HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE ONE POSSESSION. WHENCE [DO WE INFER THIS]? SINCE IT IS SAID:<sup>132</sup> THUS SAITH THE LORD: THE HEAVEN IS MY THRONE, AND THE EARTH IS MY FOOTSTOOL; WHERE IS THE HOUSE THAT YE MAY BUILD UNTO ME? AND WHERE IS THE PLACE THAT MAY BE MY RESTING PLACE ?<sup>133</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: HOW MANIFOLD ARE THY WORKS, O LORD! IN WISDOM HAST THOU MADE THEM ALL, FULL IS THE EARTH, THY POSSESSION.<sup>134</sup> ABRAHAM IS ONE POSSESSION. WHENCE [DO WE INFER THIS]? SINCE IT IS WRITTEN: AND HE BLESSED HIM AND SAID: BLESSED BE ABRAM OF GOD THE MOST HIGH, MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH'.<sup>135</sup> ISRAEL IS ONE POSSESSION. WHENCE [DO WE INFER THIS]? SINCE IT IS WRITTEN: TILL THY PEOPLE PASS OVER, O LORD, TILL THE PEOPLE PASS OVER THAT THOU HAST MADE THINE OWN,<sup>136</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: AS FOR THE HOLY THAT ARE IN THE EARTH, THEY ARE THE EXCELLENT IN WHOM IS ALL MY DELIGHT.<sup>137</sup> THE SANCTUARY IS ONE POSSESSION. WHENCE [DO WE INFER THIS]? SINCE IT IS SAID: THE SANCTUARY, O LORD, WHICH THY HANDS

HAVE ESTABLISHED,<sup>138</sup> AND IT IS SAID [ALSO]: AND HE BROUGHT THEM TO HIS HOLY BORDER, TO THE MOUNTAIN, WHICH HIS RIGHT HAND HAD POSSESSED.<sup>139</sup>

**BARAITHA 11. WHATEVER THE HOLY ONE, BLESSED BE HE, CREATED IN HIS WORLD, CREATED HE NOT BUT FOR HIS GLORY, AS IT IS SAID: AND [AS FOR] EVERYTHING THAT IS CALLED BY MY NAME, INDEED [IT IS] FOR MY GLORY [THAT] I HAVE CREATED IT, I HAVE FORMED IT, YEA I HAVE MADE IT,<sup>139</sup> AND IT SAYS [ALSO]: THE LORD SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER.<sup>140</sup>**

- (1) Lit., 'tongue', 'language', v. n. 2.
- (2) The whole of this paragraph is introductory. The chapter that follows is not actually a part of the Mishnah, but consists almost exclusively of Baraithas i.e., dicta of Tannaitic authorship not included in the Mishnah of R. Judah ha-Nasi (v. supra p. II, n. 1), the exception being a saying by R. Joshua b. Levi an early Palestinian Amora. The chapter is otherwise known as פֶּרֶק קִינֵי תוֹרָה 'The Chapter on the Possession of Torah,' its subject being the praise of the Torah, or as פֶּרֶק ר' מֵאִיר 'The Chapter of A. Meir,' from its opening words, and forms the eighth chapter of Tractate Kallah. It was attached to Aboth (which consists of five chapters) as a sixth chapter, apparently after it had become customary to read the chapters of Aboth in their order on the successive Sabbaths between Passover and Pentecost, of which there are six (v. Introduction). The choice of this chapter to fill the gap is to be explained by its being in style and subject matter close to Aboth, and by its being appropriate, by reason of its praise of the Torah, for the Sabbath preceding the festival celebrating, inter alia, the Giving of the Torah on Sinai.
- (3) Lit., 'chosen'.
- (4) Some translate 'their Mishnah'.
- (5) רֵעַ companion, friend, sc. of God, so explained by MV and others who quote Ps. CXXXIX, 17 which they understand as, How precious are (רֵעֵי) Thy friends (A.V. thoughts) to me, O God (Rashi a.l.). For the righteous as God's friends (אֲוִדָּה) cf. Isa. XLI, 8; Prov. VIII, 17; Ps. XCVII, 10; Ex. XX, 6; Deut. V, 10.
- (6) One that loves God is himself beloved of God. v. Prov. VIII, 17, I love them that love me, cf. I Sam. II, 30.
- (7) Cf. supra I,12.
- (8) The expression was probably suggested by Judges IX, 13.
- (9) Cf. Job XXIX, 14; Isa. LXI, 10.

- (10) Sc. of God.
- (11) מִכְשָׁרְתוֹ Hif'il of כָּשַׁר to be proper, fit, suitable, cf. Est. VIII, 5. In Rabbinic Hebrew it is mostly used in the technical sense of being legally valid or ritually fit.
- (12) Prov. VIII, 14.
- (13) L. 'kingly appearance'.
- (14) L. 'personality that commands obedience'.
- (15) Cf. Prov. ibid. 15, (Wisdom-Torah speaking). By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.
- (16) MV adds 'from Heaven'.
- (17) Cf. Ps. XXV, 14, The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him; Amos III, 7. He hath revealed his secret to his servants the prophets.
- (18) V. supra II, 8. R. Johanan b. Zakkai's characterization of R. Eleazar b. 'Arach.
- (19) The quality attributed in some texts to the well.
- (20) One of the first generation of Palestinian Amoraim (middle third century). A prolific and popular Aggadist.
- (21) בַּת קוֹל lit., 'the daughter of a voice, or of a sound,' a secondary sound caused by the reverberation of an original sound, used of (i) an echo, (ii) a sound caused by a sound that was originally divinely uttered, and intended for human hearing. Man cannot endure hearing the direct voice of God, v. Deut. V, 22, if we hear the voice of God any more, then we shall die.
- (22) Through neglecting its study and practice.
- (23) Tanhuma ibid, 'rebuked of the Holy One, blessed be He.' The verb נִיחַ means to rebuke, censure, reprimand, and is also used of a form of excommunication. MV. adduces Deut. XXVII, 26, Cursed be he that confirmeth not the words of this Law and quotes Shebu. 36a to the effect that 'cursed' there has, inter alia, the meaning of excommunication.
- (24) Prov. XI, 22. The Hebrew rendered 'a ring of gold in the snout', viz. נֶנֶם זָהָב בֵּאֵף is taken as pointing to the opprobrious appellation 'Nazuf' i.e., the rebuked one. This form of play on words is called נוֹטָרִיקוֹן notaricon (from Latin, notarius, a shorthand writer) a mode of cypher-writing; טַעֲמָה 'discretion' as used in the Wisdom literature is taken as one of the synonyms for Torah. The meaning intended here is in the nature of the following: One who has capacity for Torah ('a fair woman') and turns his back on it ('turning away from discretion') is like a swine that has a gold ring in its snout (Nes'em Zahab be'af) and burrows with it in the mud and dirt, and therefore incurs divine censure.
- (25) Ex. XXXII, 16.
- (26) 'Read not but (read)' is an exegetical device used when the expounder felt that a minor alteration of a word would provide a 'short cut' to the interpretation he wished to convey. It was a deliberate and manifest play on words, and was not

intended to indicate a variant in the Scriptural text, (v. Taylor a.l. and Bacher ערני המדרש I, s.v. קרא).

(27) Treating the Hebrew place-names as if they were common nouns, the passage may be taken to mean 'Through (God's) gift (to Israel) (i.e. the Torah) (one attains) a heritage of God; from the heritage of God (one is raised) to high places.' MV adds: 'But if he cultivates overweening pride, God brings him low, as it is said, And from Bamoth (i.e. high places) to the valley (Num. XXI, 20, the continuation of the quotation in our text). V. 'Er. 54a.

(28) פרק an old term for a Psalm, also used for a section of the oral law (Mishnah), v. Bacher, op. cit. s.v.

(29) הלכה an accepted or decided law. V. Bacher op. cit. s.v.

(30) פסוק a rather shorter division of Scripture, synonymous with הכתוב v. Bacher op. cit. s.v. The division of the Bible into chapters and verses (called פסוקים in neo-Hebrew) is a much later device.

(31) דבור (a) divine speech, (b) Biblical expression. (c) saying. V. Bacher op. cit. s.v.

(32) אות lit., 'sign'. letter (of the Alphabet), word, a name of God, etc. v. Bacher op. cit. s.v. The 'Gemara' to Kallah VIII says 'one single letter' refers to the correct spelling of words in which one is in doubt about one letter only, e.g. whether to use א or ע.

(33) The 'Gemara' to Kallah VIII in the name of Raba defines the two things as: (i) The principle that study in the company of a fellow-student is preferable to solitary study; and it is to this that David referred when he said (Ps. LV, 15) together we sweetened counsel (which- [study of the] Torah) with the emphasis on 'together'. (ii) The lesson that it is proper to proceed to the House of Prayer not alone and leisurely. but in company and eagerly; and it is this that David meant when he said (ibid). In the house of God we walked with the throng (ברגש), which may also mean with eagerness, enthusiasm). Yalkut, Samuel, 142, reproduces two different lessons which Ahitophel is supposed to have imparted to David. (i) When the fatality of 'Uzza's death occurred in connection with the conveying of the Ark on a cart (II Sam. VI). Ahitophel drew David's attention to Num. VII, 9, according to which the Ark was to be borne on the shoulder. (Sifre, Num. 46, p. 14a; J. Sanh. X. 2.) (ii) When David was digging the foundations for the Temple, he dislodged a stone that had stopped up the depths, the floods of which then threatened to overwhelm the earth. David enquired whether it be permissible to write the Divine name on a potsherd and throw it into the water, knowing that the water would obliterate the writing. Ahitophel drew a comparison with the instance of the Sotah (the wife suspected of unfaithfulness). There it is ordained, the priest shall write these curses in a scroll and he shall blot them

with the waters of bitterness (Num. V, 23) and the passage containing those curses contains also the Divine name which, too, the priest has in such a case to blot out. If, argued Ahitophel, in the hope of re-establishing peace in one household, the Divine name may be obliterated, surely the same may be done for the sake of the well-being of the whole world (Mak. 11a, cf. I. Sanh. ibid). Hertz in JQR. N.S. Vol. X (1919). pp. 109ff. argues strongly in favor of an anonymous suggestion that instead of שני דברים בלבד (two things only) we should read שנידברים בלבד, which = they merely

spoke to one another, conversed.

(34) So the Versions, but the author of the Baraita evidently thought of the word אלוף as derived from the root אלף meaning 'to learn' and understood it as 'teacher', or, in accordance with the use of the word in Gen. XXXVI as 'chief', 'superior'.

(35) מידעי Ps. LV, 14. It appears not impossible that the word was understood as 'my man of knowledge'.

(36) Hal wa-Homer (v. Glos.). The Hal wa-Homer here is certainly not a very evident one. If our text is correct (v. however p. 81, n. 6) we must assume that the argument intended is: If David who was a King referred in such respectful terms to Ahitophel who was only an ordinary person (and not an exemplary one at that), because he had learnt from him only two things, how much more should a person who has learnt something from his equal or from his superior, accord the latter respect.

(37) Prov. III, 35.

(38) Ibid. XXVIII, 20.

(39) Ibid. IV, 2. The process of reasoning here resembles an equation. Prov. III, 35 {the wise == the perfect shall inherit shall inherit Honor == Good } Prov. XXVIII, 10. and, since Good=Torah (Prov. IV, 2) Honor=(Good=) Torah.

(40) The proverbial meal of a poor man. V. Ber. 2b.

(41) Cf. Ezek. IV, 11.

(42) This saying is to be found in Tanh. נז beginning (but not in ed. Buber) where it is clear that it means that one who wishes to study Torah in earnest should deliberately adopt these measures of self-discipline. Rashi, however, says it does not mean that a wealthy person should reduce himself to a life of penury, but that even if a man be so poor as to be able to afford no more than bread with salt, etc., study of the law is nevertheless expected of him; if one is rich, his duty to engage in the study of the Torah is all the greater (MV).

(43) Ps. CXXVIII, 2. Cf. ibid. CXIX, 71. Cf. supra IV, 1.

(44) Consider learning the greatest of all honors (v. infra Bar. 5) or 'covet not more honor than that to which your learning entitles you.' Some texts: 'Covet not honor. More than thy learning (shouldst thou) practice' which is reminiscent of supra I, 16, and III,



9. The reading adopted is more in keeping with the Baraitha as a whole.

(45) With its luxuries and dainties.

(46) V. supra IV, 13.

(47) V. supra II, 14 and 16.

(48) For this use of ב v. BDB. s.v. ב I, 7 d. The better-known usage of ב קנה (Beth pretii) e.g. Gen. XXXIII, 19, has evidently misled translators and commentators of this Baraitha, where that construction is impossible, since the fact is not that either the kingship or the priesthood are acquired at the price of, or in return for, or by means of, the respective Ma'aloth, but rather that the Ma'aloth are acquired in virtue of the kingly or priestly office.

(49) One enumeration can be traced in I Sam. VIII, 11-17 (v. Elijah Wilna to our Baraitha), and another is detailed in Sanh. II, Rashi says that on investigation both lists prove identical.

(50) מעלות, raised positions (steps), excellences, preferments, prerogatives, distinctions.

(51) V. Num. XVIII, 8, to the end (v. Elijah Wilna ibid.) and the list in Tanhuma Bamidbar, 29.

(52) I.e., (more or less) specific qualities which when present in a man show him to be a possessor of the Torah in a comprehensive and complete sense.

(53) Lit., 'the hearing of the ear'.

(54) 'Thinking out aloud' one's learning, likewise articulate rehearsing of the expositions of others, are now, as ever, characteristic of, even if not exclusively peculiar to, the Jewish Torah-student, Rabbinic pedagogics insist upon audible study, probably because for a learning that was exclusively oral, audible study was almost a sine-qua-non. Cf. 'Er. 53b-54a.

(55) 'Heart' means the seat of the reasoning faculties, now termed 'mind'.

(56) שכלית (שכול) הלב, Rashi says, 'I cannot see any difference between this and the former quality.' L. however says, the former means understanding in the sense of deriving conclusions by means of logical processes, the latter-deep (intuitive) insight into the hidden meanings of the Torah.

(57) In his bearing towards his master (L.).

(58) Sc. of God.

(59) V. Baraitha 1.

(60) Cf. the phrase שמחה של מצוה, The joy expended on, and experienced in, the performing of a divine precept.

(61) Personal attendance on scholars, constituting 'apprenticeship' to them, is considered superior even to study itself (v.

Ber, 7b), cf. Prov. XIII, 20. Every serious student of Rabbinics, especially if he aspires to the Rabbinical Degree, submits to a course of שמיוש

(62) דקדוק הבריים Meticulous and objective examination of the subject of one's study in collaboration with fellow-students, i.e. one's equals. MV reads דקדוק הבריים 'attachment to colleagues.'

(63) פלפל from פלפל התלמידים, 'a pepper-grain' with reference to its extreme fineness, and to the sharpness of its taste and aroma. In the case of disciples, credit is given for sheer ingenuity in theoretical reasoning without strict regard to its immediate objectivity. As an exercise developing the mental faculties, 'Pilpul' is intended to serve in good stead when with a fuller store of knowledge and a maturer appreciation of the realities, the erstwhile Talmid, now a Haber or Hakam, is called upon to apply his knowledge in practical fashion.

(64) Calculated and purposeful approach to problems confronting one.

(65) Cf. supra III, 10.

(66) Cf. supra I, 5.

(67) Cf. supra Baraitha 4 and III, 10.

(68) 'Laughter', cf. ibid. 13, though it cannot be understood here in so extreme a sense as it is suggested to have there.

(69) Cf. supra II, 2 et al.

(70) Cf. supra ibid. 9.

(71) Their moral steadfastness and intellectual honesty. Most commentators render 'Trust or faith in the wise.'

(72) So that suffering does not deflect him from the study and practice of the Torah. The man of Torah is able to 'take things philosophically' and to derive salutary moral gain from evil and painful experiences.

(73) Realises the comparative lowliness of man's estate, cf. supra III, 1, IV, 4, or, knows his own place vis-a vis other, and greater, scholars. Cf. supra IV, 12; V, 7. MV: He knows his place in the house-of-study, even though he always arrives there so early in the morning, that it is too dark to distinguish with one's eyes one seat from another.

(74) Torah makes him so contented that worry does not interfere with his further study (v. MV).

(75) Cf. supra I, 1.

(76) Cf. ibid. 11.

(77) Cf. supra II, 8.

(78) Cf. Baraitha 1.

(79) For the phrase cf. Ps. XI, 7.

(80) Lit., 'loves'.

(81) Cf. Prov. IX, 8, Reprove a wise man and he will love thee.

(82) For a similar phrase cf. I Chron. XXIX, 17.

(83) MV adds, 'and he runs not after honor.' Cf. 'Whoever goes around seeking greatness, greatness flees from him, and, Whoever runs away from greatness, greatness follows him.' ('Er. 13b).

(84) Cf. supra IV, 7.

(85) He considers judicial office as a burden and a weighty responsibility, and not as an opportunity of exhibiting authority.

(86) Disliking the 'ipse dixit' he shares the burden of giving a decision with his co-judge who may be a

layman, or with some greater scholar whom he consults. Cf. supra IV, 7, 8.

(87) Or, 'causes him to incline towards' Induces his colleague to take a lenient view.

(88) He guides and directs his legal assessors so that they reach a true understanding of the case, and a correct knowledge of the relevant law.

(89) Peace must be allied to Truth, in judgment, v. supra I, 18. Most commentators and translators take 'Shares in the bearing peace' as denoting qualities that should characterize the relationship of the possessor of Torah towards all men. This may well be so, but here, it appears, his attitude towards his (lay) court assessors is, in the first place, meant.

(90) Some versions, 'his heart'.

(91) Or 'his teaching', which is perhaps better as 'sedateness' (ישיבו) (presumably, mainly, in learning) has already been given in this list.

(92) Some read as in supra V, 7, q.v.

(93) Cf. supra I, 13.

(94) Cf. supra IV, 5.

(95) Cf. ibid. I. Or render 'Acknowledges his teacher to be superior to himself in wisdom' (L.).

(96) Sc. from his teachers.

(97) Est. II, 22. This dictum is attributed in Meg. 15a to R. Hanina.

(98) The subject in all cases is (Words of) Wisdom, which is identified with Torah,

(99) Prov. IV, 22.

(100) Ibid. III, 8.

(101) V. p.86, n. 12.

(102) Prov. III, 18,

(103) Ibid. 1, 9.

(104) Ibid. IV, 9. Some versions insert here ibid. IX, 11.

(105) Ibid. III, 16.

(106) Ibid. III, 2.

(107) So in Tosef. Sanh. XI, 4, but J. Sanh. XI, 3, R. Simeon b. Menasya, who was a contemporary of R. Simeon b. Judah. The latter, however, is not only one of the 'tradents' par excellence, but the main tradent of R. Simeon b. Yohai (v. Bacher, Tradition, pp. 80 and 82).

(108) One of the foremost disciples of R. Akiba. Whilst his father appears to have been persona grata with the Roman authorities, R. Simeon himself was their bitter enemy, on account of the selfish mercenary and immoral motives that prompted even their apparently good actions. Eventually he had to flee them and, together with his son R. Eleazar, hide in a cave for thirteen years. (Shab. 33b.) During that time his knowledge of both legal and mystical lore increased phenomenally. In the Mishnah the name R. Simeon (without further description) denotes R. Simeon b. Yohai.

(109) This list contains, apparently, eight items, whereas the next Baraita refers to 'the above seven qualities.' Heidenheim (quoted in Baer's Siddur

Abodath Israel and in MV, p. 561), pointing out there is no Biblical citation in support of comeliness, which shows that it is not intended to rank as a separate and distinct accomplishment, renders 'Comeliness, consisting in strength, etc.' — only seven qualities. Heidenheim was, however, apparently unaware of Elijah Wilna's comment in which the latter points out that there is no Scriptural quotation for 'wisdom' which he, accordingly, deletes. This, too, leaves only seven. As for 'comeliness', he points out that Prov. I, 9 and IV, 9, cited in the previous Baraita, offer apposite Scriptural authority. In J. Sanh. loc. cit. 'old age' is omitted and only 'hoary age' is given. L. says there is obviously no need for proof that strength, riches, honor and wisdom are 'good things, and is of opinion that all the Scriptural texts here, are given, as they are required, in support of the claims made on behalf of old age and hoary age (treating them as one) and children, as these are liable to be disputed on the grounds that hoary age, entailing physical weakening, and the possession of children, owing to the uncertainty as to how they will grow up, appear to be not unmixed blessings.

(110) Prov. XVI, 31.

(111) Ibid. XIV, 24.

(112) Ibid. XVII, 6.

(113) Ibid. XX, 29.

(114) Isa, XXIV, 23.

(115) A disciple of R. Meir and a contemporary of R. Judah ha-Nasi whom he survived, and, thus, one of the last generation of Tannaim.

(116) מדרות v. supra V, 10. Cf. p. 67 n. 3.

(117) R. Simeon b. Menasya must have lived to a considerable age (v. n. 7) to have had the opportunity of testifying so unequivocally to the qualities of Rabbi's sons,

(118) A contemporary of R. Hanania b. Teradion; taught in Caesarea, He held that the Roman domination was heaven-ordained and was respected by leading Romans, many of whom attended his funeral (A.Z. 18a). His name does not occur in the Mishnah.

(119) Cf. supra IV, 15.

(120) A denarius of gold = 24 Denarii of silver,

(121) Prov. VI, 22.

(122) Midrash Tehillim to Ps. I, 3, adds, 'from the worms,' and Gen. Rab. XXXV read, 'in the hour of death', (123) MV: 'it shall speak for thee,' i.e., intercede on thy behalf.

(124) Ps. CXIX, 72.

(125) Hag. II, 8.

(126) Elijah Wilna emends to 'Four'. Sifre Deut. 309 (p. 134a) enumerates only three (Torah, Israel, Sanctuary), Mekilta Beshallah (Shirah) Pes. 87b, adding Heaven and earth, gives four. In all these parallels the reference to Abraham is omitted. MV, though retaining it in its text, comments on its clumsiness.

- (127) V. preceding note.
- (128) Elijah Wilna deletes this item. V, *ibid*,
- (129) Perhaps transl. 'an unique'.
- (130) Wisdom (= Torah) speaking.
- (131) Prov. VIII, 22.
- (132) Elijah Wilna deletes from here onwards and continues from 'And he blessed him, etc.', thus eliminating the incongruous introduction of the reference to Abraham, and providing a suitable scriptural authority for 'heaven and earth' as a 'possession', viz. Gen. XIV, 19 (which is also the relevant citation in Pesah. 87b).
- (133) Isa. LXVI, 2.
- (134) Ps. CIV, 24. This is the only rendering applicable here. קנייך (spelt חסר 'defective' as in some texts) is taken as a singular.
- (135) Gen. XIV, 29. If this should, after all, be intended as a proof for Abraham as a possession', the verse would have to be understood thus: 'Blessed be Abraham of the Most High God who possesses him even as he possesses heaven and earth' (MV), or 'Blessed God because He is possessor of heaven and earth which owe their existence to the merit of Abraham,' (Rashi).
- (136) Ex. XV, 16.
- (137) Ps. XVI, 3. 'The holy' was taken by the author of the Baraitha to refer to Israel; 'my delight', חפצני, he understood as 'that which [desire to possess]'; cf. the use of חפץ in Mal. III, 2; Prov. III, 15.
- (138) Ex. XV, 17.
- (139) Ps, LXXVIII, 54. As the first quotation Ex. XV, 17 did not employ the term 'possess', the latter is provided by adducing, as a complement the verse from Psalms. Rashi criticizes the reference to the Sanctuary as a 'possession' on the ground that the proof is indirect.
- (140) Ex. XV, 18.